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ABSTRACT

Written especially for students, staff, faculty, administrators, and trustees of the college, this history of Prairie State College in Illinois traces the college's development from its inception in 1957 through 1982. This book contains the following chapters: (1) "A Community Emerges"; (2) "An American Educational Institution Emerges"; (3) "Higher Education Under Siege"; (4) "A Junior College Is Founded"; (5) "A Junior College in Infancy"; (6) "Becoming a Community College"; (7) "Breaking Away and Forging a Community"; (8) "Looking toward a New Era"; (9) "Hard Problems Thwart High Hopes"; (10) "Turmoil Strikes in the Late Sixties"; (11) "Administration and Faculty Alienate"; (12) "Alienation Increases and a President Is Terminated"; (13) "New Leadership and Reappraisal"; (14) "A Main Campus at Last"; (15) "Student Services and Activities"; (16) "Faculty and Administration Strains Continue But Improve"; (17) "Carrying Out the Community College Mission"; (18) "Getting Along with the System and Neighbors"; (19) "Another Era Begins"; (20) "Adjusting to a New Campus and a New Administration"; (21) "Profile of a Community College Approaching Its First Quarter-of-a-Century"; (22) "Continuing the Task of a Community College"; (23) "Providing More Community Services"; (24) "Providing More Student Services"; (25) "Apogee and Dismay"; and (26) "The College Reaches a Milestone. (The history includes five pages of sources and a chronology). (KP)

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Prairie State College In Its First Quarter Century

1957 - 1982

A Community College History

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BY RICHARD G. SHERMAN

PRAIRIE STATE COLLEGE IN ITS FIRST QUARTER-CENTURY, 1957-82:

A COMMUNITY COLLEGE HISTORY

By Richard G. Sherman

Prairie State College, Chicago Heights, Illinois 60411

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TO PRAIRIE STATE COLLEGE

WHERE I SPENT THE MAJORITY

OF MY ACADEMIC CAREER

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FOREWORD

My formal association with Prairie State College was limited to teaching a course in political science in the summer of 1979. Yet in a way, I was "present at the creation." For Prairie State College did not suddenly emerge full grown, with campus, buildings, staff and thousands of students on Halsted Street, in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Originally I knew the institution as Bloom Community College.

A community college is a "people place." As such it becomes an organic entity, living, growing, ever changing, as people grow, mature and change. In this context Dr. Sherman traces the origins of the college through the origins of several high school districts within the community that formed the college.

I remember well how the institution began. After numerous studies and much discussion, in 1957 the citizens of the Bloom Township area voted to support a college designed to meet the post-high school and adult education needs of the people of the community. A small professional, part-time staff spent the summer of 1958 bringing Bloom Township Community College into being.

The first year was especially harrowing. Curriculum planning, course development and staffing were major challenges. Some of the bits and pieces of administrative operation were developed on an "as needed" basis. I remember the sense of panic I felt in mid-semester when I realized a grading and reporting system had yet to be finalized and a permanent record and transcript form approved and printed.

With nurturing, the college, stabilized, grew and met its goals. An evaluation of the academic competence of faculty and students, the appropriateness of the curriculum and student service programs culminated in the accreditation of the college by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in the spring of 1965.

However, major changes were just off the horizon. The ferment in Illinois higher education in the late 1950s and early 1960s led to the publishing of a "Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois" in 1964 by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. This plan was supported by the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor's Office. The Master Plan report had characterized the then operating community colleges as "poorly financed, badly housed and inadequately supervised." A state program to correct these perceived shortcomings was made law in the 1965 Illinois Public Junior College Act. Simply put, the public school-district colleges were forced to withdraw from the school districts and reorganize as separate institutions.

The emerging of Bloom Township Community College into Prairie State College was comparable in its physical and psychological development to an individual going from childhood to adulthood. In the summer of 1966 Bloom Township Community College became independent, and its name was subsequently changed to Prairie State College.

The College changes continuously to reach the goals set for it through community and state directives. And it remains healthy and flourishing. Dr. Sherman's history is a remarkable contribution to the literature of community college education. I congratulate him for his steadfastness in bringing this work to fruition.

Albert H. Martin
Mesa, Arizona
1991

PREFACE

This book is a legacy to the college I served for nearly three decades--the major portion of my professional life. Few people have the privilege to share in the founding of an educational institution and participate in its growth and service. Such a favor was mine. It is my purpose in this book to detail, inform and interpret how this college was founded and developed through its first quarter-century.

Having been a part of the college from its creation has advantages and disadvantages when writing its history. A historian must always try to place himself in the spirit of the time of which he writes. Here is where I have an advantage. There is also the disadvantage of living in the era and being too close to it.

I have definite opinions about the history of Prairie State College. I have tried, nonetheless, when writing about controversial issues, such as faculty unionization and teachers' strikes, to relate each side fairly.

Since this is a history written especially for those who have been associated with Prairie State College, such as students, staff members, faculty, administration, trustees and the community at large, I have attempted to stress the narrative. Thus footnotes have been confined to an occasional note at the bottom of the page. The narrative, nevertheless, relies on sources which the reader is entitled to know; these have been listed in the form of notes in a separate section. Those sources relied on most heavily are detailed in a commentary on the sources, also in a separate section.

The few illustrations that are used emphasize different locations of the college. An extensive pictorial history of the college would be a worthwhile subsequent project.

What has impressed me most during Prairie State College's first 25 years is the numerous difficulties that the college confronted and overcame. This speaks well for the strength of this young institution.

Writing the history of Prairie State College took a long time, but was never a bore. The sentiment behind the effort is best expressed by Rudyard Kipling in his "Prelude to Departmental Ditties and Other Verses."

"I have eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine.

Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease,--
One joy or woe that I did not know
...."

RICHARD G. SHERMAN

Crete, Illinois
Summer, 1991

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A book is never complete without the help of many people. The two who helped me the most are my wife, Louise French Sherman, and my daughter, Lucy Sherman Elliott, both of whom encouraged me to write this book. My wife was especially helpful in critically reading much of the manuscript and listening attentively throughout the writing.

Others have contributed much. Without support of the college community through the trustees there would be no publication. From the outset these stewards of the college supported the project with no restrictions or limitations and insured its publication.

Early in the project, Doris Hill (1926-1991), a former trustee and before that a supporter of the college, contributed her professional expertise as general consultant on the publication. George A. Fox, director of the college Learning Center, provided technical advice and support. Sandra Hecim, executive secretary to several presidents, facilitated research by placing the administrative files at my disposal completely indexed. She also provided factual information at a moment's notice as did Janet Wickersham in the vice-presidents's office.

President Harold Garner deserves special notice for rescuing this project, in limbo for five years, and insuring its publication before his retirement.

Several others at the college helped immeasurably in producing the finished product. Denise Czuprynski, director of community relations, served as editor and did much to improve my syntax. Phyllis Nelson, a published poet in her own right (Whitney Scott) served as publication coordinator and directed the project through the labyrinth of details involved with obtaining an International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and United States Library of Congress classification. Paulette Lively took my floppy disks and converted them into print; Geraldine Vazquez was a splendid production manager; William Carlborg provided technical advice and in the process twice rescued my hard disk from oblivion; and Elizabeth Pew kept the communication lines open by answering numerous phone calls.

Four others deserve special recognition. They are: James M. Howard, Senior Deputy Director of the Illinois Community College Board; Lester G. Sons, Vice President and Editor of *Star Publications*; Carl O. Peterson, Senior Reference Librarian of Governors State University; and my former colleague and friend, William A. Shroyer, formerly a John Hay Whitney Fellow at Harvard University and longtime, eminent member of the Bloom Township High School English Department. These four read the entire manuscript and offered invaluable, constructive criticism.

Many people who played a part in the college's history read portions of the manuscript, and some suggested modifications.

Readers of different sections were H. Robert Andrews, Paul Ashley, Dominic J. Callacci, Grace Chamberlain, Dale Collins, Richard C. Creal, Charles Creasser, Charles C. Donovan Sr., Gerson Engelmann, Bruce Enselman, Katherine Gavin, Charles R. Gordon Sr., James H. Griffith, Joseph Hawkins, Ashley L. Johnson, Lester K. Kloss, Brian Knight, Clare A. Luecke, Robert Marschner, Raymond C. Marthaler, Albert H. Martin, Alma Martin, Lorenzo Martin, Charles R. Mason, Fred J. Meyer, Patrick A. Parisi, William E. Patton, Nello Petersanti, Richard Peterson, F. Carr Price, Glen A. Schmitz, Clayton M. Smith, Gerald W. Smith, Glenn E. Stehr, James M. Troutman, Percy E. Wagner, Susan N. Weiland, Fred L. Wellman, David G. Whitaker and Lynn A. Wiley.

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To the librarians of all the municipal libraries in the college community who provided material on their respective communities.

And certainly not least an acknowledgment to my students from whom I learned much more than they will ever realize and to my colleagues of more than 30 years from whom I learned much through friendly conversation.

INTRODUCTION

The 1957-1982 period in America can be viewed as one of the most turbulent quarter-centuries in United States history.

The 4 October 1957 launching of the first unmanned space satellite by the Soviet Union, the 30 March 1981 assassination attempt on the president of the U.S., the 1963 assassination of another president, the 1968 assassination of a presidential candidate and the other assassination that year of a civil rights leader marked this era as one of the most shocking. Throughout this era a war in Vietnam persisted, widened, shook a nation and deeply affected American education as well as other institutions. Impact of this war was so great that there were moments when violent protests shook and shocked American society. Then as the war wound down, an international energy crisis contributed to instability.

In this time of trouble on the national, state and local scene Bloom Community College (Prairie State College) came into being, struggling and surviving all the while improving its image and increasing its support from a community that was a microcosm of the urban, industrial nation that is the United States of America.

Forces and Changes

During the first two and a half decades in the life of Prairie State College no episode dominated more than the U.S.involvement in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This undeclared war which claimed thousands of American lives and billions of dollars had much impact upon American life and higher education.

Other changes were bearing down as well. The United States economy was emerging from a manufacturing to a service economy, during the 1960s and '70s.

In the late 1950s when Prairie State College came into being, heavy industrial manufacturing was the bellwether of American industrial might. Chicago Heights was a center for this type of production. Even at that point, change was underway. Foreign competition in steel production was beginning, and demand for industrial products was declining.

Growth in the consumer business and financial sectors tripled between 1950 and 1980. In 1982 a United States Labor department study showed more Americans working in the consumer, financial and service industries than in production jobs for the first time in American history.[1]

This shift toward a service economy meant a shift in demand for "knowledge workers." In heavy industry the bulk of production jobs are blue-collar jobs held by men. In a service oriented economy workers are those whose output does not consist of a tangible item such as the production of an automobile but of a transaction or similarly intangible act. Service industries include the hospitality industry, auto repairs, recreation, health, legal services and education. Women occupy a large portion of jobs in a service-oriented economy.

Other rapid changes marked this era. The United States entered the Space Age in the late 1950s triggering the era of high technology. Control of precise instruments operating in outer space was provided through telecommunications. When tele-communications linked with computers the Information Age arrived. This linkup made information readily available in much less time and sometimes all at once.

An American Educational Institution Emerges

Few Americans escaped the impact of all of this. Vietnam, social tumult, inflation and the changes in the economy and technology affected institutions of all kinds especially in higher education.

The most notable characteristic of this influence was the rapid increase in enrollments and size of colleges. The era of the '60s and '70s in higher education was one of tremendous growth. In 1958, 3.2 million students were enrolled in colleges throughout the United States. By 1980 this figure had expanded to 11.6 million.[2] New institutions sprang up and college and university budgets increased tremendously. With new programs and faculty being added. Higher education was indeed a growing industry during this period.

Many reasons explain this expansion, including the rise in the birth rate or the "baby boom" between 1946 and 1964 which provided college students for the '60s. This period was also marked by a growing interest among young people in attending college. The public was beginning to recognize the strategic importance of higher education and basic research. The dramatic outburst of scientific knowledge accompanying the Space Age spurred the desire for more education along with advanced technology's demand for new skills.

These pressures pushed for the development of junior or community colleges, offering the first two years of post high school education. Junior colleges had originated in the United States in the 19th century but were private colleges for the most part. Public junior colleges developed in the 20th century. In 1960 there were less than 500 junior colleges in the United States, of which 60 percent were public. By 1980 the number had grown to more than 1,200, of which 85 percent were public. These American institutions were enrolling more than one-third of all students in American higher education.[3]

Strong public support buttressed this boom in higher education. Soon after the Soviet sputnik came the National Defense Act in 1958. Aim of this law was to assist in improving and strengthening the American educational system at all levels, especially higher education. The law was designed to accomplish this task by establishing federal scholarships and loan programs. The Higher Education Act (1965) and the Middle Income Student Assistance Act (1978) followed. These laws revised and increased public support over the next 25 years. In addition to scholarships, the federal government provided substantial sums of money for research and technical or occupational programs, particularly at the junior college level.

Illinois Higher Education 1960-1980

In Illinois, higher education encountered the same problems. Enrollments boomed more than in the nation at large. Between 1960 and 1965 enrollments in Illinois four-year colleges increased 62 percent from 68,000 in 1961 to 111,847 in 1965 as compared to a national figure of 52 percent during the same period. And these figures did not include the thousands enrolled in community or junior colleges. Adding to the immediate problem of trying to accommodate a torrent of students seeking post-secondary education was the ponderous problem of organizing a statewide system of higher education.[4]

The issue was how to reconcile the University of Illinois as the primary institution for public higher education in the state in relationship to other four-year teachers colleges, one of which (Southern) had grown to the point where it rivaled in size the University at Champaign-Urbana. In the late '40s the state was governed by two boards: The Trustees of the University of Illinois regulated the Champaign institution while the State Teachers Board set policy for other four-year colleges.[5]

In 1954 the General Assembly created a Commission on Higher Education and in 1957 replaced this with a second commission which recommended the establishment of an Illinois Board of Higher Education to provide a solution to "the problem of the general overhead control of higher education in the state."

In August 1961 an Illinois Board of Higher Education was created and Illinois higher education began to take shape. Under this board were three other boards: The Trustees of the University of Illinois; the Trustees of Southern Illinois University; and the Trustees of the Illinois Colleges and Universities which included Eastern, Northern, Western, Illinois State at Normal and Illinois Teachers College in Chicago.

First priority for the Illinois Board of Higher Education was to develop a statewide long-term master plan for higher education. This plan evolved in three phases in the early 1960s as Master Plan I, Master Plan II and Master Plan III.[6]

Phase I confined itself largely to a consideration of Illinois junior colleges and recommended "the establishment of the state college system through acquisition of existing colleges." These recommendations led to the enactment of the Public Junior College Act on 15 July 1965 which created a statewide public junior college system that became effective 1 July 1966 with a state junior college board under the Board of Higher Education.[7]

Junior colleges were not new in Illinois. The first public junior college in the nation was established at Joliet in 1902 and Bloom Community College became the twelfth such institution in Illinois in 1957. There were at least 11 private junior colleges in Illinois at this time and between 1957 and 1962, 11 more public junior colleges were formed.

Between 1965 and 1968 the junior college movement in Illinois developed in dramatic fashion. In this short span 34 districts were created, with 70 percent of the land area of the state and 87 percent of the population assigned to a junior college district. By 1980, there were 39 junior college districts and 51 campuses. Ninety-five percent of the population was within a junior college district. More than 60 percent of college freshmen in Illinois attended a public junior college.[8]

With establishment of Governors State University in 1969, the organization of higher education was revised to include another board. This was the Board of Governors overseeing Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, Northeastern Illinois University and Governors State University.

A Community and Prairie State College

Despite well-laid plans at the State level, a junior or community college does not begin nor survive in a vacuum. A community takes the initiative, founds the institution and provides support. Located 30 miles south of Chicago, Prairie State College has served a community composed of four townships: Bloom and Rich in southeastern Cook county;

and Crete and Monee in eastern Will county. Students from these four townships have always provided more than 90 percent of the enrollment. Within the 150 square-mile Prairie State College district are 16 villages and municipalitiesm, each with their own allegiance; but a spirit of cohesiveness and unity existed for many decades prior to the beginning of the college.

Forces which have had a significant bearing on producing modern America contributed to the development of the district. In the pre-Civil War decades the Western movement from New England and Pennsylvania around the southern edge of the Great Lakes brought settlers to the area. Both the old and new immigration waves in the late 19th and early 20th centuries left their imprint on the community. Then the powerful twin forces of urbanism and industrialism came in the first decade of the 20th century.

Because of geological factors, railroad transportation and proximity to the southern edge of Lake Michigan with access to iron ore, industry located in the northeastern section of the community. Thus, population gravitated to this point and a central city, Chicago Heights, was incorporated, first as a village in 1892, then as a city in 1901. Bedroom villages like Flossmoor and Olympia Fields in the northwestern corner of the district developed in the post-World War I suburban growth. Homewood, a similar village in the late 1900s, had existed as one of the early rural settlements of the community since the early 19th century. Glenwood in the northeast; Matteson, Richton and Monee to the southwest; and Crete in the southeast were other rural settlements dating to the early 19th century.

Then in the late 1940s, Park Forest, one of the first planned communities, or model cities, was implanted in one stroke on 2,400 acres of cornfield at the western edge of Chicago Heights. This village was an example of the new suburbia, the packaged villages that became the dormitories of the new generation of post-World War II America. Park Forest was unique in that the average villager's age was in the late 20s. Residents were mostly recent college graduates and World War II veterans. They were commuters with employment in Chicago who seized the opportunity to create a new and different type of community for modern times.

The impact of this new village on Chicago Heights was especially noticeable. As Park Forest grew rapidly in population and established the first suburban shopping center in the Chicago area, the central city (Chicago Heights) began to feel its position threatened and inter-city rivalry developed between the new community and old community.[9]

The impact of modern America, indeed, made itself felt on the college community, but there were other influences. One was the increase and movement of minorities. From the beginning the four-township area was a melting pot. Originally, the Scotch-Irish dominated in the middle 19th century. Germans were the next group to come, and as industrialism developed, the Swedes, Italians, and Greeks arrived. The early 20th century brought the Poles, Lithuanians, Czechoslovakians, Bohemians, Hungarians, Croatians and Serbians. These people were minorities in terms of nationalities when they arrived.

In 1970, however, the United States Bureau of the Census revised its definition of minorities to mean racial groups. According to the Bureau of the Census minorities are blacks, Hispanics, Asians or Orientals and American Indians. In the post World War I and II, eras minorities under this definition began to enrich the college community. In the '20s migration from the south brought blacks to work in the factories and truck-garden fields. About the same time, Mexican-Americans began to migrate in small numbers to the area.

In the 1950s this group increased in numbers, and the Chicago Heights area became home to the largest Spanish-speaking population in South Cook County.

By the middle of the 20th century the college community was a microcosm of the United States. Flossmoor and Olympia Fields were two villages in the district that represented the highest socioeconomic strata of American society. At the other extreme was East Chicago Heights near the lowest end of the scale. In between were Homewood, a stable, middle-class community, and Park Forest, a paragon of post-World War II suburbia. Rural areas existed in Crete and Monee township. Minority population came close to the national average in terms of blacks and Mexican-Americans albeit slightly below national figures in terms of Asians and American Indians.

During its first 25 years in existence, more than 50,000 people enrolled at Prairie State College and more than 5,400 received degrees or certificates enabling them to live fuller and better lives and to find employment.

This raises several questions: What is the story of this college? What forces had a bearing on the College? What kind of a college did these forces produce? Is there any theme that runs through the development of this college? Is there any message behind the story? And what does it all mean? A history of Prairie State College through its first quarter century will provide answers to these queries.

CHAPTER ONE

A COMMUNITY EMERGES

The 144 square-mile community which produced Prairie State College can be traced to the late 18th century. Development of the college community demonstrates several of the great themes of United States demographic history or growth and movement of population. Native Americans or Indians occupied the region first. Next came the old and new immigration sources followed by the modernization of the country through industrialism and urbanism, culminating in the movement of people from central cities to suburbia between World Wars I and II. These forces helped shape the Prairie State College community by the mid-20th century.

Origins of a College Community

From the beginning Prairie State College has served an area of many small and medium-sized communities located within the boundaries of four contiguous townships (Bloom, Rich, Crete, and Monee) in Illinois' southeastern Cook and eastern Will counties. During its first quarter-century, more than 90 percent of PSC's students came from this area. Others have come from Indiana and foreign countries.

Northern Illinois was inhabited by Indian tribes in the 150 years prior to the settlement by other American people in the early 19th century.

Chief Pontiac (1720-1769) and the Ottawas, inhabited the area that is now Will county in the 18th century. Other tribes in the region included the Mascoutin, Fox and Pottawatomie. Another tribe, the Sauk were allies of the British during the War of 1812. They were paid annuities by the British government for their assistance. Chief Black Hawk (1767-1883) led journeys in the early 19th century down Sauk Trail to Fort Malden near Detroit to collect their annual payments.[1]

Perhaps the first white people to visit the area in the late 17th century were the French Jesuit missionary and explorer, Jacques Marquette (1637-1675), Louis Joliet (1645-1700) and the Franciscan missionary and explorer, Louis Hennepin (1640-1701). Settlement of Caucasians to any extent, however, did not begin until the early 19th century.

The first white settlers to move into the upper Midwest were native-born Americans who were previously living in the east and southeastern sections of the country. The migration of these people came from two main directions. Those from the northeast entered Illinois at the northeastern corner of the state from across Ohio and Indiana. A second direction of migration came from the southeast across Kentucky and Indiana and into southern Illinois.[a]

---

[a] Two prominent Illinois citizens demonstrate these paths of migration. Cyrus H. McCormick (1809-1848) who came to Illinois in 1847 is an example of the northern path; and Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) who came to Illinois in 1830 from Indiana and Kentucky is an example of the southern path.

The prospect of cheap land made possible by the Preemption Act (1841) prompted thousands of native Americans to move into the upper Middlewest. This preemption, a landmark in the history of the United States public domain, established that a settler should be given special privileges and consideration. One feature was that a settler, upon evidence of having cultivated the land that he claimed, could buy a maximum of 260 acres at the minimum price without auction. The settler could immediately sell his claim to another, but an amendment of 1843 prohibited the settler from making more than one preemption claim.[2]

Immigrants from western Europe provided the second source of white settlers who came to the upper Midwest between 1830 and 1860. The German revolt of 1848 compelled many people from that country to migrate to the United States. And the attraction of cheap, if not free land attracted them to northern Illinois. They entered the country at eastern seacoast ports and New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico. Those from the eastern coast came overland by railroads while those from New Orleans came up the Mississippi river.[3]

These migrants' settlement patterns formed along two lines that converged at the section of what is now the Prairie State College district. One line extended south and slightly east along the Vincennes Trail leading from the Wabash River to Fort Dearborn (Chicago), now known as Dixie highway. The other line extended southwest along what is now the mainline of the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad. Thus, settlement of the Prairie State College district in the early 19th century followed a popular pattern of settling along Indian trails and railroad mainlines.

Perhaps the first settlement in the college district formed in 1833 at the intersection of Dixie Highway and Sauk Trail. This settlement was known as Thorn Grove. Later the name was changed to Bloom, the English spelling of the German name Bluhm, in deference to the wishes of the German settlers and in honor of Robert Bluhm (1807-1848), who was executed in Vienna.[b]

Within a few years another settlement formed a few miles south of this intersection in what is now Crete. And another settlement formed at the north central edge of the college district in what is now Homewood. This settlement was originally named Hartford in deference to the original family of settlers. For many years Hartford was almost exclusively a German settlement, and in 1869 was renamed Homewood. In addition to native-born Americans and those from Germany, many immigrants from Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Scotland, Ireland and France settled in the area along Dixie highway from Homewood (Hartford) to Crete.[4]

Two other settlements developed along the northern edge of the college district in the 1830s and 1840s. In what is now Country Club Hills, a settlement of Germans operated farms in an area that became Cooper's Grove. To the east of Homewood a settlement called Hickory Bend took shape. The name was changed to Glenwood in 1871.[5]

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[b] Robert Bluhm, sometimes spelled Blum, was a leader in the movement for the unification of Germany and a delegate to the Frankfort Parliament. He was executed 9 November 1848. The fact that a community in the heart of the United States would take the name of a German leader is testimony to the influence of German immigrants in the area at that time.

While settlement in the college district followed a line from the northcentral edge through the center to the south, another line of settlement formed from this point in a southwestern direction. This settlement came later, however, and followed the development of the Illinois Central Railroad.

Two illustrious sons of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas (1813-1861), may have had their differences but both agreed on the development of Illinois.

In the 1830s they recognized the need and urged construction of a railroad that would link Chicago with the southern end of Illinois. Douglas worked toward this in the United States Senate while Lincoln headed the campaign in the Illinois legislature. Finally in 1850 Congress granted 2.6 million acres of public land to the state for constructing a railroad from Chicago to Mobile, Ala., and in 1851 the Illinois Central Railroad was formed. This railroad contributed significantly to the development of the Prairie State College district for nearly 150 years.[6]

Besides providing a substantial amount of tax support, the railroad attracted settlers who built communities in the college district. Matteson, Richton and Monee were formed in the 1850s along the mainline of the Illinois Central. Other communities came into being in the 20th century with similar support.[7]

This steady growth in population during the 1830s and 1840s prompted changes in local government provisions for the state.

Under the original Illinois Constitution (1818) the County provided the basis for local government. But as the population grew the county structure as a basis for local government became cumbersome, and pressure to change this arrangement came about. Pressure came largely from New England migrants. The second Illinois Constitution (1848) thus permitted counties to change by majority vote to the township form and in 1850, Bloom, Rich, Crete and Monee townships were formed. Of the state's 102 counties, 85 have formed 1,433 townships. Sixteen counties, mostly in the southern portion of the state, have maintained only the county system. A township has virtually no meaning to the workings of Chicago government, but the suburbs remain township oriented. Many townships have cities or villages by the same name such as Joliet, Waukegan, Schaumburg, Aurora, Thornton, Cicero and Stickney. Until the late 20th century, high school districts in northern Illinois were formed on the basis of townships. Bloom, Rich, Crete-Monee, Thornton and Joliet are examples of a few.[8]

Nationalities, Minorities and A Melting Pot

Such a sudden and dramatic increase in population between 1890 and 1920 raises several obvious questions: Who were these people and from where did they come? Why did they come? And where did they settle when they arrived?

Long before the United States became a nation, and throughout its existence, most of its population came from Europe. Immigrants from Europe were the largest source of population in the early 19th century. This is identified as the Old Immigration. In this movement the immigrants came from Northern and Western Europe and settled in rural areas of the United States, largely in the Midwest.

These immigrants did not enter the United States in particularly large numbers. Until 1880, annual arrivals never reached half a million and only once prior to 1900 did their numbers exceed three quarters of a million.[9]

After 1896, however, the immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe for the first time surpassed those from Northern and Western Europe. The number of immigrants also began to increase at this time, frequently topping the million mark. Between 1902 and 1914, more than half a million immigrants poured into the country each year. In these 12 years the number of immigrants far exceeded the new arrivals between 1820 and 1880--the peak period for the Old Immigration. Where those in the Old Immigration settled mostly in rural areas, the new immigrants settled mostly in urban areas. Thus a New Immigration wave struck the country at the turn of the century; it was this wave that supplied most of the growth in population for the college district between 1890 and 1920.[10]

These new immigrants were attracted to America for the same reasons that attracted others for five centuries. It was a love of freedom and a chance to better themselves in a land that offered much more opportunity than they had in Europe.

Political oppression compelled many to leave Germany in the 1840s and political strains led Italians to look elsewhere in the 1890s. Peasant uprisings in Sicily and Southern Italy led to anarchist outrages and oppressive laws to suppress opposition. Imperial ventures into Ethiopia brought about a humiliating defeat in 1896. In Poland, too, there were political problems. Constantly under Russian domination, Polish autonomy was again abolished and Russian administration reestablished. The Russian language was made obligatory in Polish schools and the Russian government proceeded against the Roman Catholic clergy, leading to a rupture with the Vatican. Under this oppression the United States beckoned brightly.[11]

In addition to freedom, immigrants were compelled to the United States for the opportunity to improve themselves. From the beginning, immigrants have been "hewers of wood and drawers of water." That is, they have provided the work force. The accelerated industrialization around Chicago Heights provided a powerful magnet for these Europeans.[12]

Although at least 24 nationalities from Eastern and Southern Europe can be identified as having arrived at the turn of the century, the Italians furnished the largest number. Poland also contributed a substantial figure, and Austria, Sweden, Germany, Lithuania, and Czechoslovakia supplied their share.[13]

According to the original plans of the Chicago Heights Land Association the east side of the city was planned for industrial development, while residential and business development was planned for the west side of town. Immigrants, however, soon began to locate in the southeastern edge of the city in an area named "The Hill."[c] Because immigrants had little money, this area offered them closeness to their jobs. It was not unusual to find homes on The Hill with room and board available for the new working immigrant. Some homes would provide room and board for as many as 14 men who were eating, sleeping and working three shifts. Geographically, The Hill is well defined: Twenty-first Street and the Elgin and Joliet Railroad on the north; Twenty-sixth Street on the south; East End Avenue and the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad on the west; and State street on the east.[14]

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[c] The Hill section of Chicago Heights provides a priceless setting for a study of Americanization of ethnic groups which escaped sociologists for much too long. Fortunately the Chicago Heights Department of Planning and Zoning has preserved some of the flavor in their report: "The Hill: The History of an Ethnic Neighborhood," 1977.

As subsequent waves of immigrants arrived, The Hill became a melting pot for the process of Americanization., Originally the area was a small Swedish settlement. Germans and Hungarians followed. By 1905 the Italian population increased rapidly. Then came the Polish, Czechoslovakians, Bohemians, Croatians, Serbians and Lithuanians. Each brought with them their culture and, though most were Roman Catholic in religion, each nationality had its church. In 1905, St. Rocco's Church was built for a parish that was predominantly Italian. In 1914 St. Joseph's was constructed for the Polish community. As families prospered they moved into other sections of the community. The process continued with newer arrivals from Europe forming the base.[15] By the 1920s the American economy began to slacken and the population growth slowed down. The rise and fall of immigration closely correlates with the ups and downs of the business cycle. Also about this time the city of Chicago Heights began to form a deliberate policy of more stable, gradual growth rather than the boom of the previous two decades.[16]

But perhaps the most telling factor in the reduction of immigration in the 1920s was the rise of anti-immigration sentiment among native-born Americans. In California this emerged with the "Gentlemen's Agreement" to exclude Japanese. Then came the quota laws in 1921 and 1924 designed to restrict immigration from Europe.[17]

Despite a slack in the economy, the need for labor continued and with immigration declining, industry turned to other sources for workers. Minorities provided this reservoir.[d]

The first minority source was Afro-American migrants from the South. This stream of migration developed rather steadily in the 1920s as blacks moved into Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and other northern industrial centers. At first the movement into the college district was a trickle. In 1920 the black population of Chicago Heights was 3.7 percent.[18] Most black migrants found employment in local factories, and they settled on the East side of Chicago Heights north of The Hill. Another group of blacks were those who found employment on the truck-garden farms in the northeastern section of the district. They settled in the rural area east of Chicago Heights.

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[d] A recognition of minorities and their problems is another consequence of the Civil Rights struggle of the 1960's. In 1970 the United States Bureau of the Census finally got around to identifying and counting such groups in the decennial census of that year. According to the Bureau of the Census minorities are blacks, Hispanics, Asians or Orientals, and American Indians.

Another minority group to which industry turned for labor was the Chicanos or Mexican-Americans.[e] These Mexican-Americans first moved into the Midwest in the early part of the 20th century but not in substantial numbers. In the 1920s, this group increased steadily. By 1927 Illinois ranked fourth among the states in the number of Mexicans admitted behind Texas, Arizona and California. With the arrival of the Great Depression, however, their numbers decreased as those employed declined.[19]

European immigrants brought with them the same ingredients which the Founding Fathers of the United States pledged when the nation was born; that is their fortunes and their sacred honor. They also brought with them their talents. So by 1920 the college community was well on its way toward becoming a melting pot and a microcosm of the country.

Industrialism and Urbanism Arrive

Created under the impact of the westward movement and its goal of cheap land, the Prairie State College district had yet to feel the impact of two other powerful forces: industrialism and urbanism. Between 1865 and 1920 these two forces, inextricably entwined, moved the United States from a rural society to perhaps the most powerful nation in the world. These forces came about suddenly, and in less than two decades transformed the district from rural to urban and industrial.

During the Civil War many from the area belonged to the Eighth Illinois Cavalry which were first in action at the Battle of Gettysburg. When the war ended soldiers returned to their rural surroundings. The population increase was not yet rapid at that point. When population increased communities began to incorporate into villages rather than remain entirely under township government. In 1869, Homewood incorporated as a village. In 1874 Monee incorporated and in 1880 Crete followed suit. Columbia Heights, formed between Bloom and Crete in 1891. The name Columbia was taken in deference to the Columbian Exposition being planned in Chicago. In 1896 the name was changed to Steger in deference to a prominent citizen engaged in the piano manufacturing.[20]

Though the college community maintained its outward appearance of a rural and agrarian society in the '70s and '80s developments were taking place that would thrust the region into urban-industrial, 20th century America. Railroads were a key factor.

In the 1850s the Illinois Central had hastened the development of settlements along the western edge of the area. Now it was the central region which came under the iron horse's spell. In 1869, the Chicago and Eastern Illinois track was built. This made it possible to commute to Chicago in two to three hours instead of two days. This was the first railroad to directly connect Bloom and Chicago. Other lines connecting Chicago and Bloom enroute to points far beyond soon followed. These included the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul; the Baltimore and Ohio; and the Michigan Central.[21]

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[e] Chicanos or Mexican-Americans are classified among Hispanics by the Bureau of the Census. Others included in this category are Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Central and South American ethnics. For a distinction between Chicanos and Mexican-Americans see: Juan R. Garcia, *A History of the Mexican American People in the Chicago Heights, Illinois Area*, 1-2.

Now the community was well linked in terms of north and south railroads. In 1887 the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railroad was built. Construction of this road was of special importance to the subsequent industrial development of the region because this railroad ran east and west and provided a belt line. Bloom was now located at a railroad crossway with excellent connections north and south and east and west.[22]

One significant result was that population began to move north from the intersection of Dixie Highway and Sauk Trail to 26th Street and then north toward the intersection of the railroads. More important than the population movement was the construction of the Chicago Heights Terminal Transfer Railroad in the area where the north and southbound railroads intersected with the east and west route. This provided a railroad switching yard from which freight might be sent in any direction.

The advantages of such well-developed railroads for commercial development did not go unnoticed by developers and city planners like Charles H. Wacker (1856-1929). Wacker was the son of a German immigrant like many of the original settlers in the college community, his parents having moved to Chicago in 1854.[f]

In the 1880s it became clear to Wacker that Chicago's central area would soon become too congested to support further industrial expansion. Other outlying areas were needed.

One of the most attractive was the location of Bloom in southeastern Cook County. He formed a syndicate (that is, a small group of investors), purchased 4,000 acres of property in Bloom Township and persuaded the village of Bloom to change its name to Chicago Heights. A decade later on 23 February 1901 the voters decided to incorporate it as a city.[23]

The Chicago Heights Land Association promoted development of the community in various ways. In 1893 under Wacker's leadership, the association provided financial assistance and a free plant site where the Inland Steel Company located their first steel mill. As a member of the committee which planned and promoted the Columbian Exposition (Chicago World's Fair) in 1893, he seized the opportunity to advance the Chicago Heights Land Association. He did this by providing prizes in the form of land plats in Chicago Heights. This stroke eventually came to plague the college in acquisition of land on which the main building now sits.[24]

Despite the financial depression of 1893, Chicago Heights's industrial development thrived. Located on a firm rock foundation, the area was especially conducive to heavy industry. Several large industries followed Inland Steel in locating plants in the 1890s. These included the American Manganese Steel Division, the American Brake Shoe Company, and the Victor Chemical Works. Though an industrial complex itself, Chicago Heights soon became a part of the huge Chicago-Calumet industrial region which developed into one of the world's largest heavy industry centers.

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[f] In appreciation of his remarkable work and untiring efforts in sponsoring and developing the Chicago Plan, the Chicago City Council renamed South Water Street, Wacker Drive.

Bolstering this industrial might was the railroad connection that provided delivery of industrial products to nearly half of the United States population within 48 hours after leaving the terminal[25]

As if this sudden arrival of railroads and factories was not enough to deal with, the accompanying force of urbanism arrived equally as sudden.

The magnitude of the area's urbanization becomes clear with a cursory examination of the following three tables. The first table presents the population growth of the district, the growth of each township within the district and the percentage of growth by decades from 1890 to 1940.

	Bloom	%	Rich	%	Crete	%	Monee	%	Dist.	%
1890	1,514		1,435		1,688		1,309		5,946	0.0
1900	7,120	370.2	1,421	-0.9	2.039	20.7	1,216	-7.1	11,796	98.3
1910	18,339	157.5	1,301	-8.4	3,278	60.7	1,121	-7.8	24,039	103.7
1920	24,495	33.5	1,417	8.9	3,397	3.6	1,096	-2.2	30,405	26.4
1930	29,337	19.7	2,243	58.2	4,153	22.2	1,014	-7.4	36,747	20.8
1940	30,499	3.9	2,918	30.0	4,210	1.3	1,136	12.0	38,763	5.4

Two conclusions are apparent. First is the dramatic growth in the population during two decades 1890 and 1910 which increased 304.2 percent. Second, the population was moving into the northeastern area of the college district or Bloom Township. By 1900 this township grew nearly 400 percent and held nearly twice as many people as the other three townships combined. Crete was the largest populated township in 1890, though not by a large margin. By 1900 Bloom was easily the largest. Furthermore, the eastern two townships continued to grow rapidly in the first two decades of the 20th century while the two western townships, Rich and Monee, lost population. It is quite clear that the industrialization of the Chicago Heights area was bringing about a dramatic growth in population and a change in population movement within the district.

This urbanization or movement of population into communities which continue to grow can be measured.[8] The following chart demonstrates the rate of urbanization for the college district from 1890 to 1940:

1890	0.0%	1920	4.2%
1900	43.2%	1930	-3.9%
1910	17.2%	1940	-2.8%

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[8] With the rapid pace of urbanization in the United States at the turn of the century, the Bureau of the Census established a figure of 2,500 as defining an urban area., As urbanization continued to grow the Bureau revised these figures and provided other categories. The figure of 2,500 is the criterion of urbanization used here.

This table also demonstrates two clear conclusions including the rapid rate of urbanization for the area from 1890 until 1910. In 1890 the area was rural because population in each community was under 2,500.

By 1900 the area remained rural but 43.2 percent of the population was urban. Bloom Township, however, was 56.8 percent urban. By 1910 the entire college district was 60.4 percent urban. Thus the district became urbanized a decade before the United States as a nation. The 1920 census showed for the first time that most Americans were living in cities or communities with populations of more than 2,500.

Another apparent conclusion was the area's uneven rate of urban growth, after 1910. After dropping dramatically in 1920, the rate of urbanization actually declined in 1930 and 1940. The Great Depression of the late '20s and '30s explains much of this decline as poverty swept the land and population began to move back into rural areas.

Urbanization of the area was concentrated in the northeastern corner of Chicago Heights. The following table, which indicates the percentage of increase in urbanization for each township in the district from 1890 to 1940, demonstrates this concentration:

	Bloom	Rich	Crete	Monee
1890	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1900	71.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
1910	7.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
1920	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1930	-4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
1940	-2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0

The startling conclusion from this table is that urbanization of the district was concentrated in Bloom Township around Chicago Heights while the rest of the district remained rural. This urban concentration remained constant from 1900 to 1940.

This urban concentration affected communities outside Chicago Heights. As Chicago Heights became the center of the college region, the other communities developed a negative attitude toward this industrial base, despite their economic well being that resulted because of the Chicago Heights success. This paradox has prevailed throughout the 20th century and had a significant bearing on the college during its first 25 years.[26]

Despite the sudden arrival of industrialism the switch was not complete. The college district remained an important agricultural area. In the decades following World War I, for example, the vegetable acreage of Cook County was three times that of the second-leading county in Illinois and ranked high among all counties in the United States. The northeastern section of the college district continues to be among the leading regions of the state for truck-garden farming in the late 20th century.[27]

Thus the powerful twin forces of industrialism and urbanization which contributed so much to the making of the modern United States bore down suddenly and with resounding impact on the Prairie State College district. In less than two decades the community was transformed from a rural-agrarian to an urban-industrial society.

Between Two Wars

That the college community did not sustain the dramatic population growth of more than 400 percent which characterized the preceding four decades should come as no surprise. Still the district did continue to grow at a slower pace during the '20s and '30s as Rich and Crete townships became more attractive for settlement and the community came under the expanding Chicago metropolitan influence.

Where Bloom Township and Chicago Heights provided the focal point for population concentration at the turn of the century, during the '20s and '30s Rich and Crete townships became attractive areas for population growth. During these two decades Rich Township grew 105.9 percent while Crete increased its population by 23.9 percent. The '20s saw the greatest expansion with Rich growing 58.2 percent and Crete increasing by 22.2 percent.[h]

The search for recreation on weekends and extension of the Illinois Central Railroad explain the movement into these two areas. During the 1870s and 1880s professional people like doctors, lawyers and businessmen began to find time for recreation. While golf has been played in the U.S. since the late 18th century it did not create much interest until late in the 19th century when the game began to attract widespread interest among professional people.

Extension of the Illinois Central Railroad provided transportation to areas in the college district. In 1891 the Homewood Country Club was built and subsequently the name was changed to the Flossmoor Country Club. Later the Ravisloe, Idlewild and Calumet country clubs were established. Golf proved such a popular sport that a special stop was provided at Calumet for golfers.[28]

Following World War I, interest in golf resumed in the area south of Chicago. Olympia Fields Country Club, established in 1915, has perhaps, one of the most notable golf courses in the Chicago area. Founded by Amos Alonzo Stagg (1862-1965), its first president, this course has been the scene of many national golf tournaments. In 1928 the United States Open was held on this course as was the Professional Golfers Association (P.G.A.) tournament in 1963.[29]

This recreational interest in golf also explains much of the Crete area growth in the 1920s. In 1926 a 500 acre tract of land east of the village of Crete was purchased for construction of three 18-hole golf courses. As an added attraction to join the Lincolnshire Country Club a year's free membership was offered. Again a railroad, this time the Chicago and Eastern Illinois, provided convenient connections. Many summer homes were constructed and city residents often spent the summer in the Lincolnshire area.[30]

The Illinois Central Railroad was a second powerful force in the development of the Rich township area in the '20s and '30s. Nearly a century earlier this railroad contributed significantly to the early establishment of the western section of the area. As early as 1891 the Illinois Central purchased 160 acres of land north of Flossmoor Road (Illinois Street at that time) and west of Western Avenue intending to strip the land of its black dirt and hauling it to Chicago for use on the fair grounds for the Columbian Exposition.

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[h] See the population tables in the preceding section.

In 1910 excursion trains were run to Flossmoor to encourage settlement. It paid off when Flossmoor was incorporated in 1924 and Olympia Fields was incorporated in 1927.[31]

The game of golf seems to have influenced the naming of Flossmoor. The United States Post Office selected the name from a list submitted by the Illinois Central Railroad during a name competition contest. Originally in the early 19th century German settlers occupied the area, but the name Flossmoor is Scottish, as floss means dew and moor means a gentle, rolling countryside, such as that of a golf course. Furthermore, street names like Bruce, Burns, Argyle, Douglas and Braeburn are of Scotch origin.[32]

Golf interest also influenced the beginning of Olympia Fields since the village surrounds the country club and originally club members resided there. Where Flossmoor bears the Scotch influence, Olympia Fields seems to bear an ancient Greek influence. Streets in this village like Attica, Arcadia, Ithaca, Parthenon and Achilles allude to ancient Greece. Local historians hold that this influence stems from Amos A. Stagg who was a believer in the ideals of the Greek Olympic games.[33]

Regardless of the origin of village names,the important fact is that inhabitants were upper middle class Americans and not blue collar workers and immigrants like those who formed the large segment of the population of Chicago Heights in the early 20th century.

Residents in the eastern section of Crete Township near the Lincolnshire Country Club were also middle class. Thus the college community was taking on another group of residents in the early 20th century who would give the community a more cosmopolitan flavor.

Technological developments in railroad transportation provided another stimulus for population growth in the western section of the area in the 20s. Since the 1890s, cities like Chicago, Boston and New York had been turning to electricity to power their intracity transportation and replace the horse-drawn stages or omnibuses. Early in the 20th century electric power was being applied to interurban railways connecting the suburbs with the central city. In the 1920s the Illinois Central constructed an electric interurban line parallel with its main railroad line as far as far south as Matteson. Much work was required. The tracks had to be elevated and electric power lines constructed overhead. The task was completed, and on 7 August 1926 ceremonies were held for the opening of electrical interurban train service between Matteson and Chicago.[34]

This event was of special significance for the development of the south suburbs. Electric interurbans have certain advantages over steam-operated railroads in that this type of train can provide greater frequency of service and a higher average speed because of the higher rate of acceleration provided by electricity. In addition this service can provide more frequent terminals or stations. After August 1926 it became not only feasible, but attractive to move from the city into the suburbs. One could work in the city and live in the suburbs. Population grew rapidly in the late '20s along the Illinois Central interurban line.

A second technological development in the '20s influenced the community. This was the automobile. The "horseless carriage," however, did not have the effect that railroad transportation had at this time. The greatest obstacle to making the automobile more popular and thus influential was bad roads. Dixie Highway, the main route from the city, was rough and not especially inviting for traffic. So the automobile was to come later.

Historians have described the third decade of the 20th century as the "Roaring Twenties" in the United States. This was the Era of Prohibition, the time of bootleggers, "hijackers," "speakeasies," "sawed-off shotguns," and "bathtub gin." No region of the U.S. remained unaffected by this era. This sordid decade left an indelible mark on the area, largely because of its proximity to Chicago.

The Volstead law, enacted on 28 October 1919, prohibited intoxicating liquors. This included anything containing over one-half of one per cent alcohol. On 16 January 1920, Amendment XVIII to the United States Constitution prohibited the manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcoholic liquors.

With these two measures the country embarked on a "noble experiment" with Puritan zeal to rid the country of "demon rum." Like so many zealous crusades the movement was doomed before it took the vows. No sooner had prohibition become law than the country seemed to regret it because it created a new occupation — bootlegging. This previously legal business suddenly became illegal and went underground, leading to organized crime.

Those who did not care to patronize bootleggers and so contribute to crime and political corruption, made their own "bathtub" gin at home or got along with home-brewed beer and cider. People in the college district were no exception. There were rented basements and sub-basements where liquor was made in great quantity with full intention of it being sold for a great profit. This appears, however, to be more the exception than the rule in the community. There were many times when federal officers raided basements and poured kerosene into the vats to absorb the liquid. Once a vat had kerosene in it, it could never be used again.[35]

Because of its proximity to Chicago the community fell under the influence of Chicago gangs including the notorious leader Al (fonso) Capone (1899-1947). At its peak, the Capone gang took in $60 million a year. But the infamous leader had simply seized upon a business opportunity and made the most of it. "Don't get the idea that I'm one of these goddamn radicals," he explained. "Don't get the idea that I'm knocking the American system. My rackets are run on strictly American lines and they're going to stay that way."[36] The influence of organized crime in the suburbs is hardly surprising. The gangland chief occasionally visited the community bringing with him the threat of violence. And gangland-style executions were not uncommon.

On 5 December 1933 Amendment XXI repealed Amendment XVIII, eliminating the noble experiment. Profit from bootlegging was stopped but the damage had been done. Under prohibition, a criminal class had been constructed. Organized crime turned to gambling and drugs leaving a scar on the community.

Later in the decade more ominous and powerful events struck the country and community. The havoc began with the crash of the stock market in October and November of 1929, bringing the economy to nearly a halt. Heavy industry, which provided the bastion of the area's economy, was among the first and hardest hit. Thousands were unemployed, soup kitchens arose, as did other forms of welfare, as those in the community along with fellow Americans all over the country attempted to cope with the worst economic depression ever to hit the nation.

Late in the 1930s a slight recovery began but on 7 December 1941 Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. The nation turned toward fighting and winning the greatest war ever to strike the world.

The college community experienced several changes in the two decades between the wars. The population continued to grow at a reduced rate, and other sections of the district began to attract people of a different strata and from a different place than those at the turn of the century. The sordid and unseemly side of society also left its mark.

Thus, at the outbreak of World War II, the community which forms the foundation of Prairie State College was established. It stems from the prime movements and forces that developed the United States and the upper Midwest in the early 19th century.

CHAPTER TWO

AN AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION EMERGES AND EXPANDS

The concept that the junior college comprises the first two years of college training emerged in the late 19th century in the minds of three educators who were concerned with reforming American higher education. These reformers were Midwestern university presidents, two of whom headed state universities, while the third helped found and presided over a newly formed private university. These educators recognized that American higher education needed reform and reorganization to meet a changing America that was placing more demands on education.

They recommended that higher education in America be divided into two divisions, the junior and senior college. Thus emerged the concept of the junior college, which for more than a century has continued to evolve.

The term junior college to identify the first two years of college training beyond high school was probably used for the first time late in the 19th century.[a] But for decades before this time, many institutions providing post-high school training in the United States existed.

Like four-year colleges, junior colleges are of two main categories--private and public. Prior to the late 19th century most were private institutions.

For the most part they were colleges for women like Monticello Seminary at Godfrey, Ill.; Rockford College at Rockford, Ill.; and Milwaukee-Downer in Milwaukee, Wis. This was because many four-year colleges did not accept women, and these institutions referred to as finishing schools, provided women with education beyond high school.[1]

A date for the beginning of the first actual junior college has not been established. According to junior college authorities, however, speculation holds that Lasell Junior College, Auburndale, Mass. offered two years of standard collegiate instruction as early as 1852. In 1859 the University of Georgia resolved to abolish its first two years because it was felt that the students coming to Franklin College (the liberal arts division of the university) were too young. The Civil War, however, interrupted the plan which was never completed.

The high school at Greeley, Colo. added an extra year of work (the 13th grade) in the 1880s. A few years later, in the 1890s, the University of Michigan admitted into the sophomore class students who had completed five years of study in the Michigan high schools. Nearly all such experiments, however, were eventually abandoned.[2]

Until well into the 20th century the private two-year or junior colleges far outnumbered public junior colleges. In 1920 there were 207 junior colleges in the United

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[a] The term is attributed to William Rainey Harper (1865-1906) in designating the lower division of the University of Chicago "Junior College." (See: Gallagher, Edward A., "From Tappan to Lange: Evolution of the Public Junior College," Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1968) 87.

States, more than two-thirds of which were private.[3] The dramatic growth of the public junior college is a late 20th century phenomenon.

Among the first educators to see need for reform of American higher education in the late 19th century was Henry Phillip Tappan (1805-1881), first president of the University of Michigan. After being admitted as the 26th state in 1837, Michigan established the University in 1837 and located the institution at Ann Arbor in 1841. A committee of faculty members administered the university for nearly a decade until Tappan was sought from New England to serve as president.[4]

A liberal in his approach to higher education, Tappan was influenced by German educational organization. He persisted in efforts to develop a "complete" educational system according to the Prussian model, characterized by organization and uniformity. In his study of the American college system he held that the first two years of the American liberal arts colleges were not collegiate and belonged to the secondary schools. If universities could be freed from providing these capstone years of secondary education (the first two years of college) they might become "purely universities without any admixture of collegial tuition." Though Tappan never developed any concept of the public junior college, he contributed ideas for the junior college that were used later.[5]

In the 1880s the University of Michigan took steps toward moving the first two years of college training into the high school. Under President James Burill Angell (1829-1916), students were admitted into the sophomore class who had completed five years of study in the high schools. This experiment, however, was also abandoned.[6]

In 1869 the University of Minnesota was founded and historian, William Watts Folwell (1833-1927) was selected to direct the establishment of that university. The influence of German educational organization was also strong on Folwell. In his inaugural address he pointed to the need for a statewide educational organization resembling that of Germany, explaining that Minnesota should develop a three-level scheme of education--common schools, colleges and secondary schools, and the university. Like Tappan, Folwell believed that the first two years in American colleges and universities were actually secondary in nature. In his "Minnesota Plan" for the educational structure of the state he included grades 11 through 14 in his college department. This department may very well have been the first public four-year junior college in the nation.[7]

Further development of the junior college concept came in the 1890s from William Rainey Harper. The term Junior College may very well have originated with Harper. Born in New Concord, Ohio, Harper earned his Baccalaureate degree at Muskingum college and at the age of 19 received a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Yale University. A Hebraic scholar of the first rank, Harper taught Hebrew at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary in Chicago before Yale appointed him professor of Semitic languages in 1886. Having provided foundation money in terms of millions of dollars, John Davison Rockefeller (1839-1937), appointed Harper to preside over his university in 1891, and during his first decade as president Harper developed his ideas of the junior college.[8]

There is no doubt that Harper contributed much to development of the junior college concept but he has been given the accolade of the "father of the junior college," and this, in view of the evidence, may be a bit exaggerated.

Harper never developed a clear concept of the junior college in terms of its purposes and functions. His interest in the junior college idea stemmed largely from his greater concern with the complete reorganization of American education. Within this concern for reorganization was his aim of founding a "graduate university," which he hoped the

University of Chicago would become. So his concern for the upward extension of the high school was conditioned largely by his desire to build an "empire" for the University of Chicago.[9]

Like Tappan and Folwell, Harper recognized the distinction made in Germany between the work of the gymnasium (somewhat of a secondary school) and the University. He considered the first two years of college as only an extension of the secondary work. Harper also recognized that most of the secondary work of his day was college-level work three decades before. He used the term junior college in designating various divisions of the University of Chicago. In his designation of the university, the lower division was the junior college. Actually, there were four junior colleges within the University of Chicago just as there were four senior colleges.[10]

Efforts to strengthen and bring strong students to the University of Chicago and thus develop a graduate school brought Harper in touch with public school administrators who established the first public junior colleges.

During the first few years of the 20th century Harper sponsored several conferences at the university. Attending these meetings were Chicago-area high school and academy administrators. At these conferences between 1901 and 1904 the vibrant University of Chicago president enjoyed much esteem, and the junior college idea received considerable publicity.[11]

In attendance at these conferences were two public school administrators who established the first public junior colleges. These were J. Stanley Brown at Joliet, (Ill.) High School and Victor W. B. Hedgepeth at Goshen, (Ind.) High School.

The University of Chicago conference in 1902 may have been most important in the evolution of the public junior college idea because these two administrators returned to their districts and established the 13th and 14th grades as extensions to their secondary schools. Joliet established its junior college in 1902 and is generally accepted to be the first public junior college in the country. Goshen established its first full year of advanced work in 1904.[12] Now the public junior college was no longer just a concept but an established fact.

A State Public Junior College System Arrives

With establishment of the first public junior college at Joliet as an extension of the high school into the 13th and 14th grades, the movement seemed on the verge of further expansion, but such was not to be. Harper's death in 1906 deprived junior college action of a prestigious leader. Expansion did not cease, but moved westward to the shores of the Pacific Ocean and perhaps the most rapidly-developing state in the union at that time, California. Here two other educational reformers with Midwestern roots carried the idea forward.

Where establishment of the University of Chicago had a profound impact on the public junior college movement in the Midwest, the founding of another private institution, Stanford University, and its original president had a strong impact on the same development in California.

When Leland Stanford (1824-1893), the railroad empire-builder on the Pacific coast, and his wife established a university in honor of their son who died at an early age, they needed a president to guide the institution through the first difficult years. For advice they sought Andrew Dickson White (1832-1918), the eminent educator, historian and diplomat who had served as the first President of Cornell University. Without hesitation, White recommended one of his former students, David Starr Jordan (1851-1931), who was serving as president of Indiana University.

A native of New York state, Jordan took his undergraduate training at Cornell where he came under White's influence. After further training at Indiana Medical College and Butler University, Jordan taught at Indianapolis High School before an appointment to Butler as a biology professor. Indiana sought him in 1879 to head its department of natural science and appointed him president in 1885. A recognized natural science scholar in his own right, he went to Palo Alto in 1891 to become the first president of Stanford.[13]

Until late in the 20th century, private universities in the United States were hardly strongholds for popular education. In this respect, Jordan, as president of what later became one of the leading private universities in the country, presented a rather unexpected viewpoint in the need for the expansion of public education.

He seemed to echo Thomas Jefferson in this respect. Jordan shared Jefferson's views in many ways, especially in terms of democracy. In Jordan's autobiography, *The Days of a Man*, he wrote that he had been a "very busy man, living meanwhile three more or less independent lives; first, and for the love of it, that of a naturalist and explorer; second, also for the love of it, that of a teacher; and third, from the sense of duty, that of a minor prophet of Democracy." Indeed, in his views on popular education he was no minor prophet of democracy. He argued that American education needed to be "fitted to individual needs."

In the late 19th century only a small minority of Americans enjoyed the privilege or opportunity of a higher education, and only a somewhat larger minority enjoyed even a secondary education. This was largely due, Jordan believed, to restrictive high school and college curricula. Jordan, however, believed, as he stated in Jeffersonian terms, that the "democracy of the intellect" implied that all men could be "made better and stronger" by more extensive formal education.[14]

As early as 1895 Jordan spoke for an extensive broadening of the secondary and college curricula. American education needed to be more "useful" and "practical." The Stanford president stated that "education is needed in the business of living." He said that a person "is worth more to the community and more to himself in proportion as he realizes his native possibilities." Preparation for an occupation, according to Jordan, was essential for individual effectiveness. Each person must "do well the work he has to do. Whether in engineering problems or financial organization, whether in pure science or in art...whatever is done should be done wisely and well."[15]

Accomplishing these educational needs, Jordan believed, necessitated the inclusion of more science and applied science courses in the curriculum because education needed to be more useful and practical to adjust the individual to the changing environment. More students needed to graduate from high school and college because education was required for "the business of living," Jordan argued. To this end Jordan provided Stanford's leadership in allowing California high schools to be flexible in their course offerings in terms of admission to Stanford.[16] Jordan feared that American universities were neglecting undergraduate teaching, primarily freshmen and sophomores. [17]

It comes as no surprise that Jordan supported a reform of the educational structure to favor a public, statewide junior college system to accommodate these needs. He considered the junior college the most important link in the California educational system. He therefore used his prestige as president of Stanford University to advocate establishment of a statewide junior college system in California.[18]

As president of a university, prestigious as it might be, there were limitations on how much Jordan could do besides state his views and offer the support of his university. Another Midwesterner, Alexis F. Lange (1862-1924), carried the movement further. Lange's Midwestern connection was the University of Michigan from which he earned a baccalaureate degree in 1885 after which he continued his training in graduate school there. The University of Michigan was then allowing high school students with satisfactory high school credentials into the university at the sophomore level.

In 1890, two years before Lange won his doctorate, he was appointed professor of English at the University of California at Berkeley. In 1897 the university appointed him dean of letters, a position he held until 1909. During this decade Lange provided leadership for the California junior college movement.[19]

From this vantage point as Dean of Letters at the University of California, Lange recognized the problems that were accompanying the development of American universities in general. He recognized how university research had relegated teaching to a less important role especially at larger universities. He felt that college aims were being neglected in favor of university aims. Freshmen and sophomores were not getting good teaching and guidance. Something had to be done about this Lange felt strongly.

Lange was never specific in dealing with this deficiency. Should there be a special two-year junior college, or should the task be handled by an extension of the high school?

He was quite clear, however, as to purposes and objectives. Lange believed that a well-developed public junior college needed to provide transfer education, terminal-occupational programs, adult education and community service.

Lange is perhaps the first educator to recognize and urge the emphasis on community orientation. He believed the junior college would dedicate itself to the equality of educational opportunity. Junior college courses would be available on a continual lifelong basis in his concept. Adults might enroll in evening courses for all kinds of purposes--cultural development, upgraded technical skills or just to satisfy an active curiosity. Lange saw that community colleges would sponsor lectures, concerts, plays and art exhibits. In addition, industrialists, businessmen, farmers and others would be aided in solving their problems at the community college. It is this vision that entitles Lange to be called "the philosopher" of the public junior college.[20]

Thus early in the century, Lange conceived that the public community college would have three main functions: to provide two years of liberal arts instruction for students desiring to continue their studies at a university, to provide middle-level occupational instruction for students not planning to obtain a baccalaureate degree and to emphasize the instruction of adults and attempt to provide community services consistent with local needs. The future of the junior or community college was clearly envisioned.

There remained, however, the task of establishing a statewide junior college system. This came about a decade later.

It is probable that the first two-year college in the United States was established as a separate, distinct entity at Fresno City in California. Two enabling acts, one in 1917 and the other in 1921, provided the foundation for California to develop a state system of junior colleges during the 1920s.[21]

Thus in California, with the leadership of two educators who had close ties to the Midwest, the first statewide public junior college system was established.

Early Illinois Public Junior Colleges, 1920-1941

After establishing the first public junior college in the United States at Joliet in 1902, Illinois founded only one other junior college during the next two decades. There were seven public junior colleges operating in the state when World War II began. All but one of these institutions were within 50 miles of Chicago, all evolved from high school districts and all but one was created without an enabling act to provide their legality.

With the founding of the American Association of Junior Colleges in 1920, the institution of the American junior college apparently gained recognition. At least the concept of the junior college as a separate institution offering two years of college study gained approval.

There was anticipation that the movement was on the verge of widespread advancement because this definition was modified slightly in 1925 to include the statement that "the junior college may, and is likely to, develop a different type of curriculum suited to the larger and ever-changing civic, social, religious and vocational needs of the entire community in which the college is located."[22]

Although the junior college may have become recognized as a separate institution by 1920, the movement both nationally and at the Illinois state level resembled a hodgepodge and conglomeration. The American Association of Junior Colleges was an organization representing all kinds of two-year institutions. There were public and private colleges, upward-extended high schools and decapitated four-year colleges, institutions with traditional curriculums and institutions with fairly comprehensive course offerings. Some members of the association viewed their institutions as "genuine colleges," while others viewed theirs as "glorified high schools."

In 1921 there were 207 junior colleges only 70 of which were public institutions. By 1930 the total had grown to about 450 but most of them were still private. In 1940, there were 610 colleges of which less than half, 258, were public institutions. Thus, by the outbreak of World War II, the public junior college movement had slackened.[23]

In 1920 there were two public colleges in Illinois. Among the nine private institutions were at least five categories. There were three seminaries for young women: Monticello at Godfrey, Frances Shimer at Mt. Carroll and the College of St. Francis at Joliet. There were two technical colleges: Lewis Institute in Chicago, and Bradley Polytechnic Institute junior branch at Peoria. There were also two teacher-training colleges: Mallinckrodt at Wilmette, and North Park at North Park. MacCormack College was a business training institution in Chicago; and Elmherst Junior College was a pre-theological training school at Elmherst. The public junior colleges were Joliet and Crane, which was established in 1911 in Chicago, where it became the foundation of the Chicago City College system.[24]

Between 1920 and 1940 the junior college movement in Illinois expanded through the creation of nine colleges, five public and four private. Two public junior colleges that opened in 1924 were LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby and Morton at Cicero. Thornton Junior College at Harvey opened in 1927, and Lyons Junior College opened in 1919 at LaGrange.

In 1939 Maine Township opened a junior college at DesPlaines, but it disbanded in 1942; and in 1940, Centralia organized at Centralia.[25]

There is a striking pattern of similarity in creation of the four public colleges which opened in the '20s. They all emerged from a local initiative for an extension of the high school into the 13th and 14th grades and were organized under existing high school districts. Other high school districts also expressed interest in creating junior college extensions.

One such district was Bloom Township High School. In May 1925, Superintendent Edwin L. Boyer (1862-1933) expressed interest in a junior college. Writing to a University of Illinois high school visitor, the Bloom superintendent wrote: "Further, I wish to know just what we need to do to be acceptable as a junior college," because "quite a number of our people are interested in the question, and our board would not be unfavorable to it if we can arrange to meet the requirements." The superintendent continued, "I had a talk with Dr. Lewis Wilbur Smith (Joliet) and found what they do to be eligible. But I understand that work done in the high school beyond that required for entrance may be accepted at the university...any information you may give will be appreciated."[26] Thus interest in extending the high school to the 13th and 14th grades was spreading to other districts.

A second similarity in all the colleges established during the '20s was a transfer course program for four-year colleges. So the public junior college movement in Illinois during the '20s was initiated by the local high school districts to provide college-parallel work for students nearer home. Furthermore, Centralia which opened a decade later in 1940, was established for the same reason.

With the establishment of three public junior colleges between 1924 and 1927, the junior college movement in Illinois seemed on the upswing. Since each new institution was created as an extension of a high school district, officials in the Illinois office of public instruction began to realize that there was no law providing for their establishment and maintenance.

So in 1927, the superintendent of public instruction asked the Illinois attorney general for an opinion on a township high school district expending funds for establishing and maintaining a junior college in addition to the high school courses. The attorney general responded that a board of education had no authority under laws of the state to establish and maintain a junior college. In his mind there existed "a serious doubt whether the junior college constitutes a part of the system of free schools necessary to give the children of this state a good common school education."[27] The Chicago City Junior College responded to this ruling during the next three years.

Chicago City Junior College, established in 1911 as Illinois's second public junior college, was also the stepchild of the common school district, and its curriculum was designed to parallel the first two years of college. Courses began at Crane and Lane technical high schools. After operating in several high school buildings the college was consolidated in Crane High School on the near west side of the city in facilities which were not exactly the most accommodating. Opening with an enrollment of 24 students, the Chicago City Junior College grew to be the largest junior college in the nation by 1931 with an enrollment of 3,000.[28]

With the legality of the Chicago City Junior College threatened, the Chicago Board of Education sprang into political action at Springfield. Consequence was passage of an enabling act 9 December 1931 that stated, "whereas, the power of such board to manage and maintain the junior college heretofore established has been questioned, and any question of such power should be removed immediately, therefore an emergency exists, and this act shall take effect upon its passage."[29] With this law at least the Chicago City Junior College was legal.

The General Assembly solved one problem for the Chicago City Junior College but another critical issue remained. The Great Depression that struck the United States in 1929 paralyzed the American economy, and among the hardest hit areas were American cities. The nation's second largest city was no exception. With unemployment mounting and property tax payments declining sharply the city faced the bitter task of reducing expenses.

Education funds needed to be cut, and since the city junior college was an appendage to the public school system it seemed logical to include them in major cutbacks. So the city junior college closed on 12 July 1933.[30]

In March 1933, a new administration calling itself the New Deal moved into the federal government at Washington. Among drastic measures taken to pull the country out of the depression, were huge Federal spending programs. Included were sums for education, and the Civil Works Educational Service.

With funds from this source, a new Chicago City Junior College emerged. The college had one branch in downtown Chicago on South Michigan Avenue and another on the west side of the city in quarters secured through the courtesy of Lewis Institute.

The Civil Works Educational Service intended to offer educational opportunities at the junior college level for those who otherwise could not secure such opportunities. In January 1934, the city junior college was reopened with three branches. Each branch was to offer programs of general education for between 1,000 and 1,500 students.[31]

The enabling act of December 1931 which provided legality for the Chicago City Junior College, was a serious reminder to the remaining five downstate public junior colleges that their legality was in jeopardy. Despite their similarities and being within 50 miles of Chicago, there was very little coalescence and coordination. They had common interests but no formal organization to take their battle to the General Assembly for an enabling law. But, despite their disparity and the throes of the Depression, they managed to remain open and to serve local students.

They had another common bond in the intercollegiate athletic conference. One of the characteristics of interscholastic athletic conferences is that they tend to bind together similar institutions within a rather closely defined geographical area.

For some time LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby, Joliet, Morton, Lyons and Thornton had been engaged in interscholastic athletic competition. On 11 January 1936 these colleges, together with representatives from Morgan Park, Elgin, George Williams College, Proviso, St. Procopius College and Chicago Normal, met at the Central YMCA in Chicago and formed an Illinois Junior College Conference.[b] With its rules and regulations this conference was patterned after the Big Ten. Attending this conference's meetings were deans of public junior colleges who discussed their common problems, especially the lack of educational policy among them and the absence of any statewide organization to represent the downstate public junior colleges. These meetings produced the Illinois Association of Junior Colleges, which, for the next 30 years led the struggle for junior college recognition and respectability in Illinois.[32]

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[b] Through the efforts of Richard B. Jensen (1928-1979), longtime Prairie State College teacher and administrator who procured them, these records are held in the archives at Prairie State College. They include minutes of conference meetings from March 1936 through 1951 when the conference disbanded; Year End Reports, 1936-1950; Illinois Junior College Conference tournaments 1937-1949; and Correspondence 1936-1951.

With the Illinois Association of Junior Colleges leading the struggle the General Assembly enacted a second enabling act 31 May 1937 to legitimize the downstate public junior colleges. The law prescribed different procedures for establishing public junior colleges. Large districts "may, after seeking the advice of the superintendent of public instruction, establish, manage and provide for the maintenance of not more than one junior college in such district, consisting of or offering not more than two years of recognized college work beyond the four years course of recognized high schools." On the other hand, small districts "may, after seeking the advice of the superintendent of public instruction, provide by resolution that a proposition for the establishment and maintenance of such a junior college be submitted to the legal voters of such school district at any general or special election held in such school district."[33]

There remained some doubt about the constitutionality of the new act, however. The governor permitted the law to become effective without signature. Three months later Attorney General Otto Kerner (1908-1976) ruled on the question of post-graduate work in the high school. In an opinion dated 12 October 1937, he ruled that a non-high school district must pay the tuition of a high school graduate under 16 years of age who wished to take post-graduate courses because the compulsory attendance law required him to attend until the age of 16. At the same time, however, a non-high school district could not legally pay the tuition of post-graduate students beyond the age of 16 years.[34] The law was upheld. This meant that future junior college development in Illinois would take place in the existing high school districts, for at least three decades.

At least two studies have been made on the development of the Illinois junior college system. Meisterheim and Hardin agree that the main reason for the lack of more rapid development was the lack of leadership and lack of interest, whereas in California such leadership abounded.

Hardin further holds that excessive localism — that is, the desire of local school districts to protect their own interests — was another factor ruling against formal statewide development during the '30s and '40s. And fiscal conservatism on the part of Illinois citizens. was also a factor.[35]

Some high school districts like Bloom, for example, expressed an interest in the '20s in a junior college, but the momentum was simply not there to carry out the venture. Furthermore, the Great Depression wrenched the American economy, and school districts were hard pressed to maintain even high schools, to say nothing about starting junior colleges. It may be no coincidence that one opened in the '30s but disbanded within three years. Nevertheless, when World War II struck, the Illinois public junior college movement was firmly established with six institutions in addition to Joliet, the original one in the United States. They were all upward extensions of public high schools.

Thus, the junior college concept emerged essentially from reforms in higher education that developed late in the 19th century.

CHAPTER THREE

HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER SIEGE

With the conclusion of hostilities in World War II and signing of the peace treaties late in 1945, the United States, then the most powerful nation in the world, looked homeward. "The inevitable triumph" [a] had been won. The economy which had been mobilized to wage war for survival, became more industrially and technically advanced, but also more complex. The American people began to feel more of a need for higher education for their children. To a large extent, community colleges met this need.

By Pearl Harbor Day, American junior colleges were moving toward broader programs. Rather than only offering transfer courses that parallel the first two years of a four-year college, they began adding more adult education classes and community services.

After the outbreak of hostilities, the drop in college enrollment and the nationwide emphasis on training for defense work spurred colleges to engage in community activities as a temporary measure. These new offerings were so successful that junior colleges continued and expanded them after the war.[1]

With junior or community colleges moving in this new direction in the first decade after the war, a wave of students headed for colleges and universities. Behind these rising enrollments were also social and economic changes taking place.

There was an increased recognition among young people of the importance of higher education, and a large part of this enrollment came from the 10 million or more returning service people taking advantage of Public Law 78-346 (Servicemen's Readjustment Act or G.I. Bill of Rights). This law, passed on 22 June 1944, was intended to help service people readjust to civilian life. The bill contained provisions to help veterans find jobs and pick up their education where it had been stopped by service in the armed forces.[2]

Another factor was the dramatic outburst of scientific knowledge and the advancement of technology with its insatiable demand for new skills. The new position of world leadership acquired by the United States after the war made it imperative to learn more about exotic lands and their languages, to study international affairs and to come to terms with non-western as well as western cultures.[3]

The Federal Government Recommends Junior Colleges

With hundreds of thousands of Americans crowding into colleges and universities, existing facilities were being taxed to the limit and a doubling of enrollments seemed inevitable.

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[a] The phrase belongs to Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945). In his speech to the United States Congress on 8 December 1941 asking for a declaration of war against the Axis powers, he closed with this statement: "With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph, so help us God."

President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972) called for an evaluation. On 13 July 1946 he appointed a Commission on Higher Education and charged its members with the task of "examining the functions of higher education in our democracy and the means by which they can best be performed." Several leading educators studied the problem and issued a six-volume report on 11 December 1947. Their main conclusion was that American higher education needed the development of community colleges for help in meeting its problems.[4]

The commission selected three primary goals for higher education. They were: (1) education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living, (2) education for international understanding and cooperation, and (3) education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs.[5]

The main problem facing higher education, according to the Commission, was that "the educational task is partly a matter of numbers to be educated and partly one of the kind of education that is to be provided. We shall have to educate more of our people at each level of the educational program, and we shall have to devise patterns of education that will prepare them more effectively than in the past for responsible roles in modern society." Furthermore, "the American people should set as their ultimate goal," said the commission, "an educational system in which at no level--high school, college, graduate school, or professional school--will a qualified individual in any part of the country encounter an insuperable economic barrier to the attainment of the kind of education suited to his aptitudes and interests." The commission went on to state that "the time has come to make education through the 14th grade available in the same way that high school education should be available in public institutions to all youth for the traditional freshman and sophomore years or for the traditional two-year junior college course."[6]

Meeting these needs would require a radical adjustment for higher education. "American colleges and universities," states the report, "must envision a much larger role for higher education in the national life. They can no longer consider themselves merely the instrument for producing an intellectual elite; they must become the means by which every citizen, youth and adult is enabled and encouraged to carry his education as far as his capacities permit." As one means of achieving expansion of educational opportunity, the commission recommended development and enlargement of the junior college concept to include a community orientation. "They ... (community colleges) will be mainly local or regional in scope," the commission stated, "and should be locally controlled, though they should be carefully planned to fit into a comprehensive statewide system of higher education. They will derive much of their support from the local community, supplemented by aid from state funds." The commission suggested the name community college. "It may have various forms of organization," reported the commission, "and may have curricula of various lengths. Its dominant feature is its intimate relations to the life of the community it serves."[7]

The commission went further to spell out how community colleges would carry out their roles. "First, the community college must make frequent surveys of its community so that it can adapt its program to the educational needs of its full-time students. These needs are both general and vocational. Second, since the program is expected to serve a cross section of the youth population, it is essential that consideration be given not only to apprentice training, but also to cooperative procedures which provide older students alternate periods of attendance at college and remunerative work. Third, the community college must prepare its students to live a rich and satisfying life, part of which involves earning a living. To this end, the total educational effort, general and vocational, of any student must be a well-integrated single program, not two programs. Fourth, the community college must meet the needs of those who will go on to a more extended education or to specialized and professional study at some other college or university. And fifth, the community college must be the center for the administration of a comprehensive adult education program."[8]

This explains the need for a change in the name from junior to community college. The name junior was adopted when the primary function of the institution was to offer the first two years of a four-year college curriculum. Now, the commission saw another primary function in the needs of students who would terminate their full-time college attendance by the end of the first and second year of college. For them, a wide variety of curricula was needed.[9]

A large system of community colleges throughout the nation would require organization and administration. Variations of these plans might be feasible, the commission felt. These were: (1) "a statewide system of community colleges under the jurisdiction of the state Department of Education, or (2) a statewide system of community colleges under the jurisdiction of some institution of higher education, or of an authority representing all public higher education in the state."[10]

There remained, however, the hard fact of economic support. The commission did not shirk from this problem. Though education under the Constitution is a state responsibility, the federal government had supported education in terms of financial aid from the earliest period of American history. But neither individual institutions nor national educational organizations had the resources to effect the necessary changes without outside financial assistance. "These," the commission believed, "would have to come from the federal government."[11]

An examination into our educational system intensified after October 1957 when the Russians startled Americans by putting a satellite in orbit around the globe. A month later Sputnik II, more than six times heavier and carrying a live dog, orbited the earth; and in 1959 Russia fired a rocket past the moon.

These achievements led to self-searching to explain how the Soviet Union had managed to get ahead of the United States in the "space race." Publicists took a hard look at the American educational system. They found that Russia was spending a larger proportion of funds on education than the United States, and Russian and Western European students who left school at 18 were better educated than the average American of college age.

United States' response was quick. In less than a year on 2 September 1958 came the National Defense Education Act (Public Law 85-864), "an act to strengthen the national defense and to encourage and assist in the expansion and improvement of educational programs to meet critical national needs." The act consisted of 10 titles, or parts. At least two were of special assistance to community colleges. Title II provided loans to students, and Title VIII provided aid for vocational education programs. This act set the stage for federal assistance to colleges and universities for several decades.[12]

Illinois Higher Education Has No Plan and No Program

Illinois public junior colleges continued the pattern of slow, sporadic development out of high school districts with a minimum of state funding and no statewide planning from 1940 to 1958. There was simply no plan and no program. Despite lack of support, five colleges were established during this period, three under the patronage of the University of Illinois extension program in the late '40s and two others completely on their own in the '50s.

The General Assembly authorized a survey of all higher education facilities in Illinois. George A. Works (1877-1957), of the University of Chicago and adviser to the State Finance Department, was placed in charge. To undertake the junior college portion of the survey, he called upon his colleague Leonard V. Koos (1881-1976), one of the leading authorities in the country on junior college education. Not unlike the president's commission three years later which surveyed higher education in the nation, the major portion of the report dealt with the junior college. This section was entitled: "The Junior College in Illinois," which appeared in the final report with few minor changes.[13]

In preparing his report, Koos had the assistance of three Illinois junior college educators. They were Frank A. Jensen,[b] superintendent of LaSalle-Peru Township High School and Junior College; Oscar Corbell, superintendent of Centralia Township High School and Junior College; and Leland Medscker, assistant director of the Bureau of Occupational Research in the Chicago Public Schools.[14]

Professor Koos submitted his report in November 1944 and it was published within the Works Commission Report of January 1945. There were nine recommendations in the Works Report: (1) The state should encourage, not merely permit, the establishment and maintenance of a system of local public junior colleges. (2) Junior college policy should favor local public junior colleges. (2) Junior college policy should favor local public junior colleges rather than state junior colleges. (3) Encouragement should be extended to districts or areas in which a minimum junior college enrollment of 175-200 students could be expected. (4) The state should continue the policy of encouraging close articulation between the junior college and the high school. (5) The junior college should be tuition free. (6) A generous program of state aid should be allocated. (7) Since only few junior college students continue their formal education beyond the junior college, the policies of junior colleges should foster development of terminal programs. (8) The agency responsible for general supervision of junior colleges should be the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Control, however, should remain in local boards of education. (9) A State Board of Higher Education should be formed, which would have responsibility for formulating criteria for establishment of public junior colleges.[15]

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[b] Frank A. Jensen (1878-1947) was the father of Richard B. Jensen, longtime teacher and administrator of Prairie State College. Gerald W. Smith (1928-1979), original executive secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board, describes Frank Jensen as a "pioneer in the development of the Illinois Junior College system."

The report, however, evoked little effective action. In the 64th General Assembly in 1945, the report's recommendations were embodied in Senate Bill 153, but the bill never generated momentum. The bill passed the Senate, but was read once in the House and died without coming to a vote. It seemed quite clear that Illinois was not going to do much about junior colleges.[16]

Other than the establishment of Joliet Junior College under the influence of Harper and the University of Chicago, no university in Illinois expressed much interest in the junior college movement. This contrasted to California where the University at Berkeley under Lange and Stanford under Jordan took interest and provided leadership in forming a statewide system. The University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, on the other hand, took an ambivalent position in regard to the junior college movement. It never opposed junior colleges but had never done much to support them either.

This attitude changed dramatically when thousands of World War II veterans returned to civilian life seeking to enter college. Many of them looked toward the University of Illinois. In March 1946 the university was faced with about 23,000 applications for the fall term. The maximum capacity at Champaign-Urbana was 16,000. Something needed to be done. The university turned to junior colleges for help.[17]

This sudden recognition of the junior college and its prospects for higher education came directly from the Provost Coleman R. Griffith (1893-1966) in January 1945. "An intelligently developed system of junior colleges," he wrote, "will strengthen the state's educational system." He continued, "in view of the facts regarding the number of youth, the wealth, the existing school system and the outlook for the post-war world, the University of Illinois advocates and will lend its support to the creation of an expanded system of junior colleges to be located within existing high school districts or within consolidated districts ... and to be supported by (1) appropriate increases in the existing tax rates in the districts intending to initiate junior college extensions of the high school programs, and by (2) direct appropriations from the state treasury by the General Assembly on the basis of a stated amount per unit of daily attendance."[18]

An inept stance of several decades in relation to Illinois public junior colleges was suddenly changed. Now the university would take leadership and assist in the establishment of a statewide system of junior colleges in an effort to reduce the numerous applications to the University of Illinois.

In 1946, 31 high school extension centers operating under auspices of the University of Illinois opened throughout the state. That first year they had a combined enrollment of 3,115. The popularity of these high school extension centers, however, soon waned. By 1948 only nine centers enrolling 700 students were in operation. By 1948-1949 all the centers had discontinued. Mounting enrollments were relieved thanks to the sudden creation of junior college extensions.[19]

Although short lived, the high school extension centers were important to the junior college development. Of the 31 centers, three were reorganized by their local districts as junior colleges. These were Moline, Danville and Elgin.

With the closing of the extension centers Illinois public junior colleges were thrown back on their own resources. A cursory examination of legislation between 1943 and 1957 indicates that the junior colleges were neglected. Only in the '50s did the General Assembly get around to providing any financial assistance for local colleges.

In the '40s only two junior college laws were enacted. In 1943 the legislature provided a law to allow school districts to hold a proposition on whether to tax at a certain rate for maintaining their junior colleges. This was set in 1943 at 35 cents on a hundred dollars' valuation for educational purposes and 15 cents for junior college building purposes. This was revised slightly in 1945.[20]

In the '50s, however, each of the first four sessions of the General Assembly dealt with the junior colleges and enacted legislation which helped the movement. A turning point was reached in 1951. Enactment of House Bill No. 472 on 11 July boosted the junior colleges in four ways. It amended the school code making the junior colleges part of the common public school system, meaning that junior colleges were at least recognized as part of public education. Second, it prescribed a uniform procedure with respect to a necessary referendum for all districts which proposed to establish junior colleges. Third, high school districts without junior colleges were authorized to determine by referendum if they wished to vote a tax to pay the tuition of their high school graduates who wanted to attend a junior college in the state. And last, if no high school district in a county had a population of 10,000, one junior college could be established for the entire county. For most junior colleges this legislation represented a step forward. Now junior college advocates believed that the next step, state funding, could be only a matter of time.[21]

In 1953, the only junior college legislation enacted was to protect Joliet Junior College from abolishment in the event that the high school district chose to reorganize into a new community unit.

The real boost for junior colleges came in 1955 when the General Assembly provided state funding. The law provided that "any school district maintaining a recognized junior college ... shall be entitled to claim an apportionment for the school year of 1954-1955 and for each school year thereafter of $100 for each resident in attendance." At long last, junior colleges were not only recognized but the state was actually giving them financial support. There was a minor frustration in that they tried to obtain $200 per student, but were given $100. But in 1957 the General Assembly did raise the level to $200 per student.[22]

Thus, between 1940 and 1958 five public junior colleges were formed. Three of these emerged under the aegis of the University of Illinois extension centers while the other two came out of local initiatives to meet the increasing demand for post-high school education.

In terms of curriculum, these five colleges, like all the Illinois public junior colleges preceding them, essentially offered transfer programs to be applied toward baccalaureate degrees. The addition of only five public junior colleges at a time when population was growing and college enrollments were mounting, is hardly rapid growth. The question arises: Why didn't Illinois develop a public junior college system at a faster pace?

The overall status of public education in Illinois at the end of World War II does much to explain the slow development of the junior college movement from 1940 to 1958. There had been an ongoing debate for nearly 50 years about the status of higher education in relation to the state government structure. At one extreme were the universities which desired complete autonomy and freedom from the bounds of state government, while at the other extreme were certain state government reformers who desired to have public higher education placed in a department where it would be treated as any other department in the state. Under such an organizational structure there would have been little difference between the Education Department and the Highway Department or the Agriculture Department.[23]

At the close of World War II, higher education in Illinois consisted of six, four-year degree-granting institutions. These included five teachers' colleges: Southern at Carbondale; Northern at DeKalb; Western at Macomb; Eastern at Charleston; and Illinois State University at Normal. At the apogee was the sixth institution, the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

During the war a controversy began between Southern and the University of Illinois. Enrollment at Southern began to grow and the issue became one of sectionalism. Educational and business leaders from Carbondale urged that the status of Southern be changed to a university. They based their argument on the fact that the 30 southernmost counties had no liberal arts college, either public or private, and that there were no facilities for professional or technical education other than that of teaching. They argued further that the inhabitants of southern Illinois were financially less able to go outside the region for their education than people in other parts of the state.

In 1943 a bill was introduced in the General Assembly to accomplish this but it was defeated. This setback aroused bitterness, and sectional lines were formed essentially along what became Interstate Highway 70. North of this highway was Illini territory and south was Saluki land.[24]

Acrimony carried to the halls of the General Assembly where a senator who sponsored the bill to create a University at Southern Illinois, opposed a bill for a University of Illinois airport. However, a compromise was reached. Southern Illinois was given the right to expand beyond its teacher education courses. It was allowed to provide liberal and vocational education, but it could not provide instruction leading to degrees in law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, engineering or agriculture. This training would remain at the University of Illinois for several years at least.[25]

Confronted with this ominous issue of Southern Illinois, it should come as no surprise that the University of Illinois felt it didn't have time to devote to being a leader in the junior college movement.

The other four teachers' colleges were more ambivalent. They were supportive, but not so favorable to state financing. This is understandable. In the years immediately following World War II, the percentage of state revenue apportioned to higher education did not increase much, and these colleges were reluctant to share limited resources with another group of public institutions.[26]

Elementary and secondary education problems were other issues that needed attention and tended to draw attention away from the public junior college movement. Not until 1943 did high schools receive state aid of $2 per pupil.

Then there was the problem of proliferation of school districts. Illinois had long been one of the states with the most special districts of all kinds in the nation. In 1945 Illinois led the nation with 11,955 school districts, of which 9,405 had only one teacher and 4,100 had 10 or fewer students enrolled. In the same year there were also 1,362 districts which enrolled no students at all and merely maintained a legal existence by transferring and transporting their few pupils to schools in neighboring districts.[27] Such inefficiency cried out for reorganization, and as long as the junior college was tied to the high school, and the high school's own existence was in jeopardy, it comes as no surprise that consideration of junior colleges was put aside.

The city of Chicago dominated the movement in terms of enrollment through the '50s. Downstate junior college enrollments did not equal those in Chicago until well into the '60s. In 1960 the Chicago to downstate ratio was 65-35 and by 1965 it was still 55-45. The private junior colleges of which there were many, were not always strongly behind the public institutions, especially when it came to seeking state support. Then there were those within the movement who argued the advantages of waiting for the state to assume the whole burden.[28] Indeed, many within the movement itself bear responsibility for the slow pace of development between 1940 and 1958.

This rather disjointed status of public education, however, was really not as neglected during the decades immediately following World War II as it might seem. Recommendations of the Works Commission were put aside, but study and analysis continued.[29]

Out of the Commission on Higher Education would come recommendations that would become law providing for a comprehensive statewide system of higher education in which the junior college would hold an integral part.

Though the Illinois public junior college movement proceeded slowly between 1940 and 1958, within the next two decades this movement would expand dramatically. Within this milieu, Bloom Community College (Prairie State College) came into being.

CHAPTER FOUR

A JUNIOR COLLEGE IS FOUNDED

The 10 high school districts that spawned the Illinois public junior colleges from 1940 to 1962 were "cradles of a junior college." Bloom Township High School which created Bloom Community College (Prairie State College), the 13th public junior college in Illinois, was one of these. What was the origin of this high school district that formed Bloom Community College?

The Cradle of a Junior College

Public education began at the elementary level in Bloom Township and traces to 1836 with a group of seven students in one location. By 1870 there were 10 schools with an enrollment of 282. Two years later School District 1 formed to educate children who lived in Chicago Heights and Columbia Heights, which was later named Steger.[1]

Origins of Bloom Township High School trace to about 1895 when the eighth grade instructors began teaching a few students at the high school level. These people might otherwise have been unable to continue their education.

High school classes were held on this basis between 1898 and 1900 until a referendum 21 May 1900 established Bloom Township High School District 206 of Cook county.

Since the mid-19th century the township was the basis for local government, especially in northern Illinois. The township also became the organizational basis for several new high schools. A township high school allows for several separate grade-school districts to serve as feeder schools, thus providing a distinction from the unified arrangement of first through 12th grades.[2]

For the first year Bloom Township High School operated in four rented rooms from the Washington grade school. Then a bond issue of $44,000 was authorized for the purchase of a four-acre site south and west of the Lincoln and Dixie Highway intersection for a high school. Just before Thanksgiving 1901 classes began in the separate high school building.

For the first decade classes consisted of less than 10 students.[3] By 1908 enrollments began to grow rapidly, along with the booming population of the area, especially Chicago Heights.

Edwin L. Boyer, a native of Decatur, Ill., was appointed superintendent in 1908. The 46-year-old Boyer was a graduate of Illinois State University at Normal. Under Boyer's leadership Bloom High School grew to one of the largest in the metropolitan Chicago area in just two decades.

Bloom was the only public school in Bloom, Rich, Crete and Monee townships offering four years of high school instruction. In 1922 Monee opened the first two years of high school and in 1932 Crete added the ninth and 10th grades. Bloom remained the only four-year high school until 1940 when Crete opened its own high school.

To accommodate students from the area beyond Chicago Heights buses were provided to places like Glenwood, Homewood, Flossmoor, Steger and Crete. As the village of Steger expanded, the Bloom district annexed the area of Steger south of Steger Road. The district designation was changed to District 206, Cook and Will counties.[4]

In terms of curriculum during the first three decades, Bloom High School presented a program of courses weighted in favor of college preparatory subjects such as English, Latin, mathematics and history, yet most graduates did not go on to college.

These subjects were geared to middle class males. Children of immigrants were poorly represented. Many sons of immigrant parents had to work to help support the family and, thus, many of these boys did not complete eighth grade.

High school training for girls was also inadequate, and the high school attendance of blacks during the 1920s was minimal. Between 1923 and 1928 there were only five black graduates.[5] This was not unusual for a growing suburban high school in the '20s.

The rapid increase in enrollment during the early '20s created the need for more space, so plans for a new building were undertaken. In the spring of 1928 the board asked for a referendum to approve four issues: location of a site for a new high school; purchase of the site; building a new school; and $760,000 of bonds for the project. About 1,400 voters, or one-seventh of the electorate, approved all four proposals by a two to one margin.[6]

Construction had barely begun when the stock market crash of October 1929 signaled the beginning of the Great Depression. Complications arose. A declining economy and unpaid taxes provided fuel for factions who originally opposed the new building. "It's a white elephant," some had said. Others said it "was an eye-sore." Despite objections and the cost over-rides, the building was completed in 1934. The location was far from the center of Chicago Heights where the original high school was located. Population was moving north in the township and location in this area meant being able to accommodate future population growth.

The building was distinctive for its type of architecture. This style 50 years later gained recognition as "the first building in the south suburbs to be named to the National Register of Historic sites ... because of its 'art deco' architecture."[7]

Less than six months before completion of the new building, Superintendent Boyer, who had led the high school for a quarter of a century, died. The new leader was Roswell C. Puckett (1886-1939), a native of Rock Rapids, Iowa. Puckett earned his baccalaureate degree in engineering at the University of Iowa and a master's degree from Columbia University. He returned to the University of Iowa for his degree of Doctor of Philosophy. When Puckett assumed the superintendency the depression was at its depth.

A deflated economy compelled the district to watch finances closely as tax payments declined. Tuition from out-of-district students was scrutinized and those wishing to attend out of district schools were frowned upon. WPA projects were welcomed. These projects provided federal funds to paint walls and improve the school grounds.[8]

The depressed economy also affected the curriculum as enrollment increased in industrial arts courses. Apprentice training courses were installed and programs in distributive education were instituted in cooperation with the state department of vocational training. More attention was given to home economics courses as enrollment nearly doubled. Standards, however, were not lowered. In fact, they were upgraded in terms of college preparation. A grade of 80 was required for recommendation to college without an entrance examination.[9]

Another economy change was the attempt to reorganize the township on a unit basis; that is, a district including all public schools from kindergarten through the 12th grade. Such a move would reduce costs. School directors of six grade school districts approached the Bloom board on this issue in July 1933. The board felt that this would be of no benefit to the outlying districts so the board placed the resolution on file and there was no further action.[10]

Enrollment continued to grow and by 1940 had reached 1,760, making the district one of the largest high schools in Illinois outside Chicago.

Superintendent Puckett died in September 1939, and after a two-month search a successor was found. Raymond D. Meade (1898-1968) took over in December and provided leadership for the next eight years through the throes of World War II. Meade was born in Indiana but moved at a very young age with his parents to Oklahoma Territory. He interrupted his college education when he enlisted in the United States Army in World War I, rising from private to lieutenant colonel. After the war he resumed his education taking a baccalaureate degree from the University of Oklahoma. Upon completion of his master's degree at the University of Chicago he entered school administration serving extensively in administrative positions in Oklahoma, Nebraska and at West High School in Aurora, Ill., before his appointment to head Bloom.

World War II affected Bloom High School in several ways. First was in curriculum. On the night that the United States declared war on Germany and Japan, the Bloom board met and offered its services to the war effort and applied to offer ground school instruction in the Civil Pilot Training program. Short programs in compliance with the War Man Power Commission were offered. Distributive education courses were offered as were other merchandising courses in conjunction with the State Board for Vocational Education designed "to aid merchants in building up adequate sales personnel." Special attention, however, was focused on the development of a vocational education program "to serve the best interests of the community and the rapidly changing social, economic and technological conditions."[11]

Lack of finances was another effect of the war. To deal with this issue several meetings were held.[12]

Besides aiding the war effort, Bloom was called upon to serve more students. In 1942 the Matteson High School program was discontinued. Most of these students chose to come to Bloom. Students from the northern and western section of Rich township became interested in attending Bloom. To meet these demands bus service was increased west to Frankfort; south to the outskirts of Monee; east to Dyer, Ind. and East Chicago Heights; and north to Homewood. The bus district spanned an area of 39 square miles with routes that extended to 100 miles.[13]

Suburbia and Separatism

Historically, the years following great wars are difficult for institutions. During these periods problems and issues arise in the process of readjustment to times that have changed. In the first 15 years following World War II, Bloom High School faced two issues. Of least importance was the problem of disposing of the original high school building, or "Old Bloom," which was resolved in a few years. Second, and of much more importance, was the process of separatism; that is, the breaking away of many communities from Bloom and the establishment of high schools of their own.

The original high school building for 18 years remained a source of concern and consternation to the community. After the high school vacated this building it continued to be used for various activities. During 1934 and 1935 the place was used as a recreation center. From 1935 to 1943 it was a center for WPA work projects; and from 1943 it was a gymnasium for organized recreation supervised by the Park Board. The basement was a well-patronized youth center called "The Morgue." The Bloom high school district maintained the building throughout this period.

A community-wide civic committee was organized in December 1945 to consider the best possible utilization of the Old Bloom property. However, no plan of action was arrived at, and the problem languished.[14]

The question arose again in February 1950 and a committee composed of members of the Bloom High School Board, City of Chicago Heights and township was formed. This committee concluded that the school district would best be served if the Old Bloom building and site were under municipal ownership or that of another school district. The property was appraised at $90,000, but in view of the financial condition of Chicago Heights, the sale price would be $60,000 after approval by the community in a referendum.[15]

Such a reasonable price for such property did not escape commercial interests. The community perked up when an attorney and real estate broker appeared before the Bloom Board in December 1950 expressing an interest in purchasing the property for $60,000. Now the question arose: Should the property be sold to the highest bidder or made available to the City of Chicago Heights at a financial sacrifice? There were legal objections. The City of Chicago Heights and the Bloom High School district do not have identical boundaries, and it was an asset of the district as a whole. The taxpayers living outside the city would have just cause for complaint if action resulted in benefiting only residents of the city. So a referendum was held on 14 April 1951 on the question of selling at public auction the Old Bloom High School site. The issue was defeated by a turnout of 25 percent of the electorate.[16]

In a special election on 29 March 1951 voters were called upon to vote on two propositions: (1) to sell the Old Bloom site at public sale for not less than $115,000; (2) to sell the Old Bloom site to the City of Chicago Heights. Both issues passed by narrow margins and on 1 July 1952 the property was sold to the City of Chicago Heights. Proceeds would go toward an Industrial Education building.[17]

Although it took nearly two decades to resolve, the Old Bloom problem was essentially a matter of unfinished business. In the decade following World War II other issues were of much more significance for the district. One was the process of separatism. In the first four decades no other public school provided four years of high school training. A Bloom diploma certified the highest formal education for a majority of the community. In the decade following the war several communities withdrew to form their own high school districts.

Forces beyond anyone's control were behind the separatistic movement. There were the dramatic growth of population that struck the four-township region in the decade following the war and the phenomenon of suburbia. These forces led to the creation of three new high school districts, creating stress between the communities.

Bloom leadership fell to Harold H. Metcalf (1900-1987), who became superintendent in July 1947. Born in Merrill, Wis., Metcalf's father began his professional career as a public school teacher and administrator before turning to dentistry. "My father always told me," Metcalf often stated, "that I would have been a better dentist than he was." Metcalf did not follow his father's urging, but chose education as a profession. He took his baccalaureate degree in chemistry at the University of Wisconsin and later received a Master of Philosophy from the same university. After beginning his teaching career at Monroe, Wis., he entered Columbia University, earning the degree of Doctor of Education. After a few years as an assistant to the superintendent and director of guidance at Oak Park-River Forest High School he came to Bloom.

Metcalf was a humanist, taking sincere interest in the lives and families of every faculty member and staff person involved with Bloom High School. He inspired loyalty. For Bloom Township High School the process of breaking away required someone with patience and understanding. For the 18-year period during which he served as superintendent it is difficult to imagine a better choice for the position than Harold H. Metcalf.

The breaking-away process came in 1940 when Crete formed a community high school. Prior to 1932 all Crete High School students attended Bloom. In 1932 a two-year high school opened with juniors and seniors going on to Bloom. In 1943 a small section in the southeast corner of the Bloom district detached and joined the Crete Community High School and in 1948 Crete and Monee districts consolidated to form District 201-U. Severance was not difficult to understand and accept. Construction of a new high school began in 1953, and the building opened in 1954 with 297 students.[18]

A second severance came in the early 1950s with the separation of Rich Township. This carried more ramifications. When Park Forest originated, the village was located in a non-high school district.[a] In its 1949 session the Illinois General Assembly abolished non-high school districts with a grace period extending to 1953 to allow existing districts to annex or build their own schools. The reasoning was that Illinois educational authorities believed that non-high school districts were tax protective and should be eliminated for the sake of equitable school administration.[19]

In anticipation of the pending legislation and the continued rapid growth of Park Forest, a group of village citizens moved to establish a new high school district and on 20 May 1949 Rich Township voters established Rich Township High School District Number 227, the last high school in Illinois to be established as a township high school. The Rich district, however, continued to send students to high schools of their own choice such as Bloom, Thornton and Crete. In 1950 Rich had 168 students attending Thornton, 116 attending Bloom and 285 attending Crete. Tuition was paid out of taxes collected by the newly-formed district rather than from non-high school funds.[20]

Having established a high school district to provide for tuition payments for its students, Rich Township citizens considered constructing a new high school. They sought professional advice from Professor William Lawler of Northwestern University.[21]

Inter-community friction surfaced on 19 February 1951 when a group of citizens living in Flossmoor, who were in the Bloom High School District, attended a meeting of the

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[a] A non-high school district is one that does not have a high school of its own but which pays tuition to send students to neighboring district high schools.

Bloom Township Board of Education. They asked the bloom board to recognize a petition annexing four square miles of territory in Flossmoor west of Western Avenue in the newly-formed Rich Township High School District to Bloom. Not only did they recognize the petitions, but they offered to pay up to three years of tuition to Thornton for students living in the Flossmoor area already enrolled at Thornton.[22]

This warm reception was predictable. This area had been a part of the Bloom district for more than two decades. Because of its upper-middle-class status the area provided a balance to the lower economic status of East Chicago Heights and the eastern section of Chicago Heights. This balance of all social and economic groups in one district made Bloom High School one of the most unusual high school districts in Illinois, if not the country.[b]

Reaction of Rich Township residents was predictable too. A spokesman for the Rich Board objected to the petition and stated that the board was dismayed that such a move would be taken before the Lawler survey report was released. The Rich board urged citizens not to sign the petition until the survey became available for study.[23]

The Flossmoor residents, however, moved forward and on 6 March 1951 announced their plan to annex to Bloom by circulating petitions. The group stated that they appreciated the problems of the Rich board but felt their first duty was to satisfy their own area needs. They preferred to associate with a known, established and accredited high school and had voted against formation of Rich High School originally. Furthermore, Bloom was practically debt free and a first rate high school. Unification of their own village was another reason for remaining with Bloom. The group argued that Flossmoor children had long attended the same elementary public schools and only by annexing to Bloom could the village be unified at the high school level since high school students east of Western Avenue already attended Bloom.[24]

On 8 March 1951 the Rich Township High School District announced its recommendation for building its own high school after studying the Lawler survey. It was determined that enrollment would grow to 1,344 by 1959, building costs and the ability of the district to support a high school were strong, the district was in good shape to maintain a high school and the size would be appropriate. Rich seemed to have an advantage over Bloom in that Bloom growth could make it too large for an appropriate high school. They were reluctant, however, to see the Flossmoor area leave because as of 1951 of the 365 high-school-aged students in the township, 154, or nearly half, were in that area.[25]

The educational issue was now joined between Rich Township High School and Bloom Township High School for Flossmoor students. A total of 1,365 eligible voters, or 84 percent of the total electorate in the area concerned signed the petition and on 27 April 1951 the Bloom Board of Education voted to annex the four-square miles in northeastern

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[b] When foreign educators visited the University of Chicago College of Education and requested to visit a comprehensive American high school they were advised to visit Bloom Township High School because of its comprehensive student body; that is, a student body representing all socio-economic backgrounds.

Rich Township. For the first time, all of the Village of Flossmoor was located in one high school district. A Flossmoor resident was subsequently elected to the Bloom board.[26]

Rich proceeded to build its high school. During construction, upperclassmen were allowed to attend the high school of their choice while freshmen attended classes in the Faith United Protestant Church. The new building, Rich Township High School, was occupied in September 1953.[27]

In less than five years activity resumed in the Homewood-Flossmoor section. This time the movement was toward separation from Bloom and the construction of a new high school.

Action for a new Homewood high school began in 1954. A feasibility study for creating a new high school district to include the villages of Homewood and Flossmoor began the process. For many years residents of Homewood and Flossmoor had felt a need for more unity in terms of their school districts. Students of these two villages attended several grade schools; upon graduation from eighth grade they went to at least three different high schools. Some felt this worked against community unity. Rapid population growth provide a greater tax base, and feasibility studies indicated that the two villages were capable of supporting a separate high school district.[28]

Some did not take the move to separate Homewood and Flossmoor from the Bloom district with joy and jubilation. "The position of the Bloom district," said the Bloom board president, "was that we objected to the separation because it would restrict the breadth of educational potential of the student population. It would take out of the school a large body of population who were college bound and who would by their very presence demand an upgrading of the academic program of the school and most of us felt that the loss of this student population would be in the long run deleterious to the academic excellence of Bloom."[29]

For several years inter-community tensions in the Bloom High School District mounted. "This is only my opinion," said the board president, "but I have to say that the biggest push for Homewood-Flossmoor to separate was that they did not want to be associated with the 'rift-raft' that constituted a good share of the population of Bloom."[30] Others shared these sharp sentiments. Another board member said "we had to pay Homewood-Flossmoor quite a sum of money for their share of the assets of Bloom which sorely pressed us and we had to pass a bond issue to pay that."[31]

Perhaps a more balanced view of the inter-community stress came from Bloom students during these stressful years. Patrick A. Parisi who later became chairman of the Prairie State College trustees stated, "Speaking for myself, I felt a great sense of loss because many of my very best friends ... went to Homewood-Flossmoor. I'm sure there was an element in Homewood-Flossmoor who was glad to leave Bloom from what they considered to be people who were not quite as good as they were, and I'm sure there was a feeling among some Bloom students that they were glad that the snobs from Homewood-Flossmoor, who thought they were better than everybody else, were gone. Most of us, though, who had a chance to work with them and know them and develop a rapport, missed them a great deal. Many of the students in Homewood-Flossmoor have to this day remained good friends of mine and I still communicate with them and their folks, who still are very close friends."[32]

On 18 February 1957 the Cook County Board voted favorably on the new district and on 1 July 1957 the Homewood-Flossmoor District Number 233 became effective. In

September 1959 the new high school opened with a freshman class and in June 1963 the first class of 290 members graduated.[33]

At this frenetic time both sides were caught up in forces beyond anyone's control. The separation of Homewood and Flossmoor from Bloom removed a segment of its population which contributed to the comprehensiveness of its high school. Increase of the Bloom population helped the district too, making it possible to continue with a strong financial base despite the Homewood-Flossmoor loss. In fact, valuable industrial and commercial property gave Bloom a higher assessed evaluation per pupil than the separated district. And without Homewood-Flossmoor, Bloom was free to tackle other pressing problems.

Bloom, however, never lost sight of its main reason for being--to provide all the students of the district with a first rate high school education. Some of its graduates were going on to the finest colleges and universities in the country and excelling. Others were receiving training from a curriculum that provided them with skills to find employment in the township and enjoy more complete lives.

Continued rapid population growth in the southern suburbs taxed the physical capacity of Bloom High School facilities and in 1964 a second high school (Bloom Trail) opened. In less than a century, secondary education in the Bloom-Rich-Crete-Monee area had grown from less than 10 students to thousands with Bloom High School providing the original foundation.

The University of Illinois Extension at Bloom, 1946-47

Bloom Township High School, in the three years following World War II, shared the widespread grassroots attempts to establish a statewide, public junior college system with state funding and the University of Illinois extension program to offer the first two years of college training for the influx of war veterans. The efforts were at first frustrating and disappointing.

Late in December 1944 Superintendent Raymond D. Meade presented the Bloom board with a series of recommendations for post-war expansion of the school's program. His advice came on the eve of the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes Forest of Western Europe where a German counter-attack inflicted a harsh and costly blow to Allied armies moving toward the Third Reich and Hitler's *Fortress Europa*. Had the superintendent waited a few days he might have postponed his statement but the end of the war seemed imminent with an Allied triumph in sight. Bloom High School needs for the post-war period were urgent.

Among the pressing requirements were additional space and a curriculum reorganization "to include a junior college" as well. No action was taken at this time but it was agreed that careful thought would be given to these needs.[34]

Within the next few months widespread community support emerged for establishment of a public junior college. From the Chicago Heights Committee for Economic Development came the statement that "the youth of the community would be better prepared for gainful employment by an expansion of the present high school program above the level of the 12th grade to include what is generally known as a junior college. In addition, "it is suggested that consideration be given to broadening the scope of the offering of the typical junior college by including technical work related to the needs of local industry and providing additional trade-training courses of practical nature." The committee offered to cooperate in any study of the problem.[35]

From the Chicago Heights Kiwanis Club came a pledge of support. At a meeting of its board of directors including four of the past presidents, the organization decided unanimously that this program of a junior college be brought to the attention of the citizens of Bloom Township and "it was the desire of the Kiwanis Club to cooperate in every way."[36]

Labor also came forth with its support. The Chicago Heights Trades and Labor Assembly went on record "to support any workable program for the installation of a junior college in the interest of a better education for the boys and girls of our community."[37]

Religious groups offered their support for a junior college. Since the turn of the century Chicago Heights had been a substantial Roman Catholic community and from Msgr. W. E. Croarkin (1899-1973), pastor of St. Agnes Church, came the statement that "you may count on my whole-hearted support if you should attempt such a venture locally."[38]

This wide community support came to the attention of the board in February 1945. Harvey W. Adair (1881-1962), prominent farmer and rural leader in the township, longtime board member for 25 years and board president at that time, advised the board that many supportive communications had been received for establishment of a junior college. Although unanimous in their desire for a junior college, the board agreed that the public generally should be given the opportunity to discuss the proposition before initiating a referendum vote. It was suggested that a public meeting be called to discuss the matter, but prior to such a meeting a survey should be made by an outside expert in educational administration to determine the community's need for a junior college and the extent of its ability to finance one.[39]

To determine the feasibility of a junior college, the board sought Leonard V. Koos who, only a few months previously, had provided a similar report for the Works Commission on Higher Education for the State of Illinois. Mr. Adair had heard Koos speak at the University of Chicago and "was impressed with his keen insight into the needs of youth." This report, however, would focus entirely on a local junior college for Bloom Township.[40]

Despite the community support for the junior college, one hard problem remained. That was the cost. This fact did not escape Superintendent Meade. "There is no doubt in my mind about the desirability of as local junior college for the Bloom community," he stated. "There is some question, however, whether we can afford it. As you know, the public is not always gracious in providing funds. Candidly, I wonder if the people generally want education of this type badly enough to foot the bill."[41] Professor Koos was also aware of the cost factor and as a preliminary step in his report he sought an analysis of the district's financial structure.[42]

While these efforts were going forward, elsewhere inaction that would have a greater bearing on the establishment of a Bloom junior college or any junior college was underway. This was in Springfield in the general Assembly where Senate Bill 153 was under consideration.

This bill had two main provisions which, if passed, would insure the establishment and support of a local junior college. The first aimed to solve the problem of state aid for junior colleges by amending the basic school code, to make the junior college an integral part of the state system of free public education. It would provide $50 for each junior college student in average daily attendance; and equalization up to $140 per junior college student when the maximum levy for educational purposes did not produce that amount.

Second, the bill would give authority to a school district which does not maintain a junior college, to levy a tax to pay the tuition of its high school graduates who desire to attend any public junior college in the state. There was also a provision for non-high school districts to make a junior college tuition levy.[43]

In an attempt to enlist support for the bill, Frank A. Jensen, superintendent of LaSalle-Peru High School, sought the help of Bloom officials to appear before the Educational Committee of the Illinois State Senate on 18 April 1945. Board President Adair and Superintendent Meade were selected for this task. Mr. Adair spoke before the committee on behalf of agricultural groups.[44]

Despite much hard work on the part of junior college advocates throughout the state as well as at Bloom Township High School, the bill failed. It stayed in the Senate Appropriations Committee room until 7 June and finally passed the Senate, 30 to 12, on 26 June, but since the General Assembly adjourned at the end of June there was no time to complete the legislative process. The bill reached the House and was read for the first time on 27 June, but died in the House without coming to vote.

Superintendent Meade made it quite clear why Bloom Junior College did not come into being in 1945. "Frankly, in view of crowded conditions in the school and limited finances," he wrote, "I doubt if we will make a positive move in the direction of a junior college at this time."[45] Pressing problems of maintaining a high school program made the establishment of a junior college out of the question without state funding.

On 1 March 1946 Professor Koos submitted his report rather perfunctorily. His recommendations were of little use then, but a decade later they would provide the basis for establishing a junior college.

Prospects for establishing locally-initiated junior colleges with state funding were dashed for the time being, but noises were coming from other directions. Early in 1945 the Griffith Report announced that "in view of the facts regarding the number of youth, the wealth, the existing school system and the outlook for the post-war world, the University of Illinois advocates and will lend its support to the creation of an expanded system of junior colleges to be located within existing high school districts or within consolidated districts to be defined by law."[46]

Accommodations would have to be made for the large number of returning veterans seeking college entrance. Junior college extensions sponsored by the University of Illinois at large high schools throughout the state could help meet the crisis. Bloom High School could help and did!

During the first few months of 1946 Superintendent Meade attended several joint meetings of high school and university authorities discussing how to take care of the large number of students seeking college entrance in September 1946. A resolution was presented to negotiate with the University of Illinois to establish a "University Extension Center" at Bloom in 1946-1947 with "the costs to be borne by tuition ... [and] expenses drawn on the educational fund so the extension center shall not involve direct expense to the school district." In September 1946 the University Extension Center at Bloom Township High School opened. Most students were veterans.[47]

There were 18 high school teachers and 11 courses. These were English, rhetoric, speech, mathematics, Spanish, chemistry, hygiene, accounting, history, economics and drafting. Though there was no university campus atmosphere with housing units, the students formed their own college club and a basketball team that competed with other junior colleges.[48]

The Bloom Extension Center closed after one year because of faculty requirements and the increased load on high school teachers. In terms of costs, the extension center operated at a slight profit; but before the center was allowed to reopen for a second year, the University of Illinois Extension required that teachers in the college program "would have to be relieved from a corresponding portion of their high school program in order to continue to teach in the extension center." A shortage of trained teachers in 1947 made it difficult to obtain qualified faculty for the high school much less provide faculty for the extension center. So the board adopted a resolution "to close the center for the following reasons: Teachers were not released enough time from the high school to qualify; veterans had entered college elsewhere; and sufficient space was available at the Galesburg Branch."[49]

The Bloom Extension Center's short life was typical for Illinois extension centers. In 1946, 30 other high schools joined Bloom in offering college-level courses to 3,115 students. By 1948 only nine centers remained. By 1949 only three remained. Moline, Danville, and Elgin continued to operate on their own as public junior colleges.

A Junior College at Last

Hopes and aspirations for a junior college in Bloom Township which emerged briefly in 1925 and came forth again in the years immediately following World War II were finally realized in the 1950s. This time local initiative and leadership would not be denied.

Twice before the call for a junior college came from an alert superintendent. This time Harold H. Metcalf sounded the arousal at a Bloom High School Board meeting in February 1955. Word was out among administrative circles throughout the state that the upcoming meeting of the General Assembly would very likely provide financial assistance to a high school district establishing a junior college. "Eventually," he stated, "the junior college program will be subsidized at the state level." Other financial aid for the support of a junior college was also available since the abortive effort to establish a junior college 10 years ago. House Bill Number 472, approved 11 July 1951, provided that a high school district could establish and provide a tax rate for a junior college.[50]

The post-World War II baby boom was moving through the elementary schools and would be in high school soon. Already Bloom was moving to meet this wave. Plans were approved and underway for a $3.7 million addition to the high school. These plans included the construction of a fourth wing to the existing high school to form a quadrangle adding much classroom space and the addition of an auditorium. "As Bloom grows," the superintendent stated, "the need for college instruction at the 13th and 14th year levels will become more evident." In anticipation of moving toward establishment of a junior college, the superintendent contacted the State Department of Public instruction to get information about founding a college.[51]

Procedures, the superintendent advised, were as follows: The board must pass a resolution that a proposal for a junior college be submitted to the legal voters of the district. Second, the superintendent of public instruction, in cooperation with the superintendent of schools of the county, will study the junior college needs for that district. The superintendent of public instruction will report the findings to the board and if acceptable an election shall be held.[52]

Though establishment of a junior college was high on the agenda for the Bloom board throughout 1955, the primary responsibility remained with the high school itself. A survey in 1952 had led to the building expansion already underway in 1955. But an update was needed. So in September the board moved to employ the Office of Field Services of the University of Illinois to bring this survey up to date and include a report on the desirability of a junior college. The movement of the Homewood-Flossmoor area to withdraw from the Bloom district and form a district of their own was also an issue at this time. Indeed the middle '50s was a busy time for the board of Bloom Township High School.[53]

The junior college issue remained paramount and the General Assembly hastened the process with enactment of House Bill No. 886 on 9 July. This bill provided that "any school district maintaining a recognized junior college ... shall be entitled to claim an apportionment for the school year of ... $100 for each resident pupil in attendance."[54]

In one meeting about the establishment of Bloom Community College on 13 October 1955, Superintendent Metcalf addressed this legislation in his report to the board. "The most important development," he wrote, "ever to take place in the State of Illinois relating to the junior college program was that of the underwriting by the last legislature of junior college education at a level of $100 per student of the district enrolled and the indication that this amount in the next legislature would undoubtedly be doubled."[55] State funding removed the main obstacle to the establishment of Bloom College.

Drawing upon the Koos Report[c] which had been in the Bloom administrative files for nearly a decade, the superintendent launched a powerful argument for establishing a junior college as soon as possible.

The superintendent stated that "he (Koos) indicated that Bloom was one of 29 districts in the state with enrollments of over 1,500 students and one of only nine of this number which did not offer some opportunity for work at the college level." He continued, "Approximately 17.8 percent of the graduates of Bloom in 1941 went on to college, which was not far from the 19.7 percent who went to college from a dozen high schools of about the same size in districts without junior colleges, but much lower than the average of 48.4 percent who went on to junior college in the districts maintaining junior colleges."[56]

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[c] This report was prepared especially for Bloom Township High School and delivered on 1 March 1946 when prospects were bright for establishment of a junior college. This report should not be confused with the report which Professor Koos provided the Works Commission in 1944, a 47-page document which became the major recommendation of the Works Commission on the Junior College in Illinois. Hereinafter the Bloom Report will be identified as the Koos (Bloom) Report.

The University of Chicago Junior College authority's report provided basis for more argument as the superintendent continued. "There was no question but that within a year or two after establishment 175 to 200 students would be enrolled in the junior college if established." Metcalf went on, "He, (Koos) recommended serious consideration of college work on a tuition-free basis. Also he (Koos) recommended a broad program consisting of both preparatory and terminal courses in classes which might be held in the same building, taught by the same teachers, and administered by the same organization that administers the high school." The superintendent went on. "Some of the high school personnel would have special responsibility. He (Koos) stated that many of the faculty at that time (1946) were prepared to teach junior college." The superintendent added that "the faculty now (1955) has a much higher proportion of teachers with master's degrees."[57]

At this point Metcalf went on to state, "I believe that, as one of the steps in this plan, the board might start negotiations and, if necessary, condemnation proceedings to buy the Wallace property, which consists of a house, garage, and a series of lots running from Riegel Road to Dixie Highway." He continued, "Such acquisition would give Bloom a social and administrative center for the college and in addition would extend the Bloom property down to the site owned by the First Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church, thus further insulating the high school from encroachment by other institutions." Metcalf wanted no delay. "I recommend," he stated in closing, "to the Board of Education in tonight's meeting that a resolution, which is the first step in the establishment of a junior college, be passed."[58]

The argument did not fall on deaf ears. Within a few moments a resolution was passed to establish a junior college.[59]

Negotiations began in the spring of 1956 to purchase the Wallace property. Board president Paul Ashley, who took a leading part in the proceedings, comments: "The transaction was accomplished without difficulty but there were conditions that had to be met. The owner was elderly and was quite reluctant to move from his home in which he had lived for many years. His relatives, however, were anxious to liquidate the property." Condemnation proceedings were taken and "the problem was solved by purchasing the property with the agreement that Mr. Wallace would be allowed to live in his house until he died. The remainder of the property away from the home could be used for the creation of a separate building for the college without disturbing the Wallace home."[60] The first purchase of property for the college proved far easier than a second land purchase a decade later.

In December 1956 the University of Illinois Office of Field Services submitted its findings. This report corroborated the Koos report of a decade earlier in many respects. A survey of 1956 Bloom juniors and seniors indicated that 72 percent were definitely interested in further education though not necessarily college. A large proportion expressed an "interest in attending a local junior college." The report brought out the fact that many Bloom graduates were attending Thornton Junior College. In 1955-56 there were 43 13th grade students and 23 14th grade students from Bloom attending Thornton and "it may be assumed that the 13th grade enrollment of Bloom students in 1954-55 was about 46." The report went on to state that "in the light of all the evidence it seems reasonable to assume that resident enrollments in the 13th grade of a Bloom Junior College will range between 15 and 25 percent of enrollments in 12th grade, once the college has become established in the community."[61]

The report concluded by recommending "that the steps necessary to bring the junior college proposal to a vote be taken as soon as possible and that, assuming a favorable vote is secured, a broad program offering both academic and vocational/terminal curricula be developed through cooperative processes involving the board, the school staff, students, employer and employee groups, and citizens in general."[62] Like other similar studies at the national and state level, this survey pointed out that a junior college should offer both transfer programs and vocational programs and be closely involved with the community.

Bolstered by the report of the University of Illinois Field Services, the board took further steps toward establishing a junior college. Meanwhile, further support came from an editorial in the local press. "There is no questioning the fact," the editorial read, "that a great number of young people will be able to overcome financial restraints by attending a school close to home while holding part-time jobs." In anticipation of service beyond Bloom Township the editorial continued, "the junior college could be expected to be of value to many youths residing beyond the limits of the district, for tuition payments would be negligible in comparison with the savings to be realized from living at home and finding work."[63]

The superintendent stated, "My impression is that the board, in light of the meeting ... December 2, (when the field survey was reviewed) and also the favorable editorial in *The Star* ... will want to proceed with the application and the election." The board moved promptly to apply to the Office of Public Instruction to establish a junior college in the Bloom Township High School District.[64]

Approval of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction came quickly. At the board meeting 13 February 1957 the board heard the reading of a letter from Ward N. Black, assistant superintendent of public instruction and chairman of the State Committee on Junior Colleges, which read: "I hereby grant approval for the proposition for the establishment, management and maintenance of a junior college in the Bloom Township High School District, Number 106." The only matter now was a name for the college. That was done within a few minutes when the board adopted the name of Bloom Township Community College.[65]

One step remained before the proposition could be presented to the electorate. This was a resolution calling for an election. At its meeting on 8 May 1957 the board resolved to hold an election on 25 May 1957 to raise the educational rate from .75 to .95, to establish a community college in the Bloom Township High School District and to bond the district in the amount of $300,000 to build a college center on the high school campus. The three issues were combined, so a vote was either in favor of all three issues or against all three issues.[66]

On 25 May the electorate spoke about the turnout. A total of 1,424 votes were tallied with a few spoiled ballots. Among those who voted, however, the issue was clear. They wanted a college and the issue carried with 945 yes votes to 479 no votes. The margin was two to one in favor, or 66.3 percent for and 33.7 percent against. Thus Bloom Community College was established. The 12th public junior college in Illinois came into being and the struggle that began more than a decade before was completed.[67]

That the election did not produce a larger turnout of voters may be regrettable. A margin of 466 votes out of 1,424 cast is hardly a resounding triumph, but Charles C. Donovan Sr., a native of the community and board member, takes a more positive view of the outcome. "You know ... on special elections," he said, "the turnout has always been very small unless there is a great opposition to it. I would say this is quite normal. In fact it is a success to have it win by 466 votes."[68]

Success in the long struggle to establish Bloom Community College can be explained largely in terms of two factors. First was the realization that the public junior college movement in Illinois could not really succeed without firm financial support at the state level. In the early post-World War II years it was the failure to recognize this need or the refusal to consider it at all that delayed the establishment of several public junior colleges at that time. In 1951 legislation placed public junior colleges in the common school system and provided methods whereby local colleges could be formed. This recognition helped but it was not until 1955 when state funding became available that public junior colleges at the local level could be sustained.

A second factor, and perhaps more important, was that behind the establishment of Bloom Community College was local initiative and leadership. This included leadership among superintendents and boards of education.

A decade later another Bloom superintendent seized time by the forelock, alerted a receptive board and together they moved forward with local initiative toward establishment of a college before state funding was granted. This clinched the prospects.

In 1954, the Bloom High School Board was enlarged from five to seven members. Along with new faces this provided for new views. Paul Ashley, president of the board at the establishment of the college, makes this point. "I think," Ashley states, "the boards that served from 1953 to 1958 were perhaps almost rash and certainly progressive and were willing to do what was necessary to expand the comprehensive program of Bloom." He continued, "this is evidenced by the massive building program that this board undertook and also with the ease or eagerness with which the board jumped into the establishment of a community college."[69]

There was, however, one member who formed a transition between the board in 1946 which nearly accomplished a junior college and the one a decade later which realized the feat. This was Emmett C. Richards Sr. (1887-1965). For him the results must have been especially satisfying.

Thus late in 1957 Bloom Community College became a fact. The institution had been hard in coming but the real problems were ahead. The first quarter of a century would prove horrendous.

CHAPTER FIVE

A JUNIOR COLLEGE IN INFANCY

During Bloom Community College's first decade the Illinois junior college system was in constant flux. Thus, in its infancy, the college struggled on two levels simultaneously. There were the everyday "nuts and bolts" problems of getting a fledgling institution underway and the need to monitor developments that were moving steadily, if at times erratically, toward creation of a statewide system of junior colleges.

Creating an Illinois System of Public Junior Colleges, 1958-1966

After languishing for nearly 40 years, the Illinois public junior college picture changed significantly in the decade immediately following the creation of Bloom Community College. Between 1958 and 1966 numerous individuals in various capacities brought about the creation of a state system of public junior colleges, regulated both locally and by the state. From this structure emerged one of the largest public junior college systems in the nation.

The 12 Illinois public junior colleges in 1958 evoked an image of being institutions that provided the 13th and 14th years of formal education as upward extensions of high schools. The junior colleges offered transfer programs for students whose goal was to transfer to four-year colleges for bachelor degrees.

Junior colleges were essentially regulated according to the School Code. Teachers at junior colleges were certified under similar requirements to those of high school teachers; chief administrators of most junior colleges were superintendents of the high school; physical facilities were generally shared between the high schools and the two-year colleges; and the Illinois superintendent of public instruction also handled most junior college matters.

As the '60s approached these Illinois public junior colleges faced several common problems. The biggest one was financial support to carry on the task of educating a booming enrollment. In 1961-62 Illinois junior college enrollment increased 22.4 percent over the previous years to 41,000, meaning that one in five students enrolled in Illinois higher education attended a junior college.[1]

A second problem was deciding the place of the junior college in the Illinois educational structure. Junior colleges were beginning to draw more attention from the four-year colleges as the baby-boom of the post-World War II era arrived on the college scene. At this time, 83 percent of the incoming freshmen at the University of Illinois were in the upper half of their high school graduating class. Some believed that the junior college could "take care of the middle third of the high school graduating classes." And the junior college is "one way of preventing the waste involved in taking on all comers and flunking them out." Would the junior colleges remain part of the secondary education; would they become a part of higher education; or, would they have a special place somewhere else?[2]

A third problem confronting Illinois public junior colleges related to curriculum. Up to this point most junior college course offerings were transfer programs. The issue was: Will junior colleges continue to emphasize this type of training or would the curriculum be broadened to include a larger number of vocational/technical or occupational programs? Also, to what extent would the junior college be responsive to the community and incorporate community-initiated programs?

A fourth problem was the relationship of the public junior colleges to each other. Would there be a statewide system of public junior colleges or would they continue to operate individually?

These problems were worked out on two levels between 1958 and 1966. One was in the trenches of the existing public junior colleges, while the other was in conference rooms where commissions gathered information, analyzed the data and presented recommendations. There was an urgent need for coordinated efforts at both levels.

The General Assembly aided public junior colleges in these pivotal years by providing funds that sustained both the movement and legal bases. The General Assembly in 1959 supplied significant support in these directions. Senate Bill 192 and House Bill 893 passed during this session provided funds, while House Bill 1236 encouraged establishment of separate junior college districts with separate boards and taxing authority. This bill also provided for establishment of a community college in any district approved by the state superintendent of public instruction.[3]

Moline Junior College, which spawned from the University of Illinois extension system in 1946, reorganized into an area college under terms of this legislation. Other area colleges originating under this act were Spoon River at Canton, Highland at Freeport, Illinois Eastern at Olney, Triton at Elmwood Park and Rock Valley at Rockford.

More funds were not forthcoming as the General Assembly passed two pieces of legislation designed to raise funds, but the proposals were vetoed by Governor Kerner who declared that "if I had my way there would be no new taxes." This assembly, however, did pass two procedural laws clarifying the criteria for establishing junior colleges. Neither had anything to do with money. These laws demonstrated the truth of a remark by a community college president: "They are with us all the way to the doors of the vault."[4] If the state legislature sustained the public junior colleges with funding, it was quite clear that the legislators did not want to overdo.

Another branch of state government, the Attorney General's Office, contributed toward resolving the place of the public junior college in the Illinois educational structure.

In the post-World War II decades health education developed rapidly and received federal and state funding. As early as 1951, Columbia University had prepared a two-year nursing curriculum designed for junior colleges. When Illinois junior colleges attempted to install nursing programs in the early '60s they were stymied because of an advisory opinion from the Illinois attorney general.

Under Illinois law at this time the attorney general had advisory capacity to furnish legal guidance to all state officers and agencies through consultation, conferences and written opinions. When Illinois junior colleges sought to establish nursing programs they learned that these programs would not be valid because the National League of Nursing would not allow an individual to write the Board of Nursing Examinations without two years of college-level nursing training and an Associate Degree in Nursing. Legislation in 1951 placed the junior colleges in secondary education under the School Code. When Attorney General William G. Clark was sought for an opinion he concurred on 27 April 1961 that the junior college was a "mere super-high school falling within the classification of secondary schools and to be regulated as such rather than as a college or university."

Clark concluded that "the program of study of a junior college does not lead to a degree." In view of this opinion a nursing program at a junior college would not be valid.[5]

In response to widespread pressure from the health services and those who wished to alleviate the critical shortage of nurses, State Superintendent of Instruction Ray Page presented Attorney General Clark with an argument consisting of 12 reasons why Illinois community colleges should have the legal right to provide an Associate in Arts or Science Degree in Nursing. On 22 July 1963 Clark reversed his decision and opined that "a junior college is in all material respects the equivalent of the first two years of the traditional four-year college." He continued, "In specific answer to your question, therefore, it appears that the program of study provided for in the Illinois Nursing Act includes a program of studies offered by a two-year community or junior college in Illinois which may lead to an associate degree in nursing education."[6] The interpretation was that junior colleges were a part of Illinois higher education. This did much toward resolving the place of junior colleges in the Illinois educational structure. Final resolution in terms of legal status would wait, however, for another decade.

Though the General Assembly and the Attorney General's office helped the cause of the Illinois public junior colleges, most work came from the Illinois Association of Junior Colleges (IAJC). The IAJC, made up largely of junior college deans, was the most consistent voice for junior college development throughout the state during the '50s and '60s. Leaders of the association during this period were: Harold Bitting (Lyons), Walter Cooper (Morton), F. H. Dolan (LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby), Lee Dulgar (Thornton), Kenneth Edwards (Belleville) , James Logsdon (1905-1984), (Thornton), Albert Martin (Bloom), Mary Miller (Danville), Gil Renner (Elgin), Elmer Rowley (Joliet), Turner Trimble (Amundsen), Earl Trobaugh (LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby) and Harold White (Morton).[7]

Holding meetings twice a year, this organization studied the Illinois junior college problems, prepared reports and made recommendations. One meeting at a Hazel Crest, Ill., motel in October 1961 anticipated the Public Junior College Act (15 July 1965). According to minutes of the meeting the association agreed that:

> "1. A statewide plan for junior colleges in Illinois should have high priority in consideration of legislation for an improved educational program in Illinois.
> 2. Such junior colleges should be comprehensive in providing for transfer programs, vocational, semi-technical and technical training programs and education for out-of-school youth who need further training or retraining.
> 3. District organization as provided in Section 12-16.5 of the 1959 edition of the School Code of Illinois (the junior college district) is preferred.
> 4. Such junior college districts in their organization should include as ideals these factors:
>   (a) an area which will permit all students to commute.

(b) an element of local control in admissions, supervision and support.
(c) standards for recognition--established at the state level.
(d) State support for operation shared by local areas.
(e) a system which would permit students from any part of the state to attend junior colleges in any other part of the state without the payment of tuition in excess of that for resident students.

5. The Board for Higher Education, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Advisory Committee for Junior Colleges and the Junior College Association of Illinois should share jointly the responsibility in providing leadership."[8]

Although the organization was dedicated to development of a public junior college system, the IAJC was somewhat restricted. The organization was primarily a dean's club and in most cases the junior college dean was not the chief administrative officer.

Martin explains the problems: "Most superintendents," he said, "thought of junior colleges as 13th and 14th grades rather than a separate entity. All junior colleges in Illinois in 1961 were extensions of high schools." He continued, "locally the superintendent was the chief administrative officer and the high school board was the governing board. So I as dean needed the approval of Dr. Metcalf and the board to get things done. It seemed in many ways that Metcalf and I were pushing in different directions. I usually would strive for more independence for the college; that is, more full-time staff and more autonomy for both staff and students. Dr. Metcalf thought in terms of one educational unit, grades 9 through 14, with interchangeable staff and facilities, and one budget to be used as needed within the district. Metcalf attended very few meetings of the IAJC so I was playing an ambiguous role. I was working with other deans to make the junior college a part of higher education while the superintendents were reluctant to move in the direction of separation. Of course, Metcalf and I never had any serious disagreement. We never got down to 'talking turkey.' We did not have to because we knew where each other stood. We tried to remain friendly components, but we needed lots of compromising. I was reinforced in my view by virtually every consultant that was brought in, particularly by the North Central Association representatives. Some of these, such as Dr. Lowell Fisher of the University of Illinois, were highly respected by Dr. Metcalf."[9]

Besides recommendations the IAJC lobbied in the state legislature every biennial session (annual sessions began in 1970). The lobbying was financed by a head tax, each junior college contributing a small amount per student enrolled. Later the association members realized that the lobbying fund was technically illegal.[10]

There were other offices and groups concerned with the orderly development of a system of junior colleges in Illinois in the late '50s and '60s. One of these was the Office of Public Instruction. Until late in the '50s this office had taken little if any interest in the junior college development. In the election of 1958, however, the winning candidate for superintendent of public instruction, George Wilkins, made a campaign promise to appoint a full-time junior college consultant to his staff and in July 1959 fulfilled his promise by appointing Robert O. Birkhimer (1913-78) to this position.[11]

This was a shrewd and significant appointment for the development of Illinois junior colleges because Birkhimer was a champion of the junior college movement and in a quiet and efficient way did much to bring about the Illinois junior college system. Birkhimer was a humanist. In his spare time he enjoyed writing poetry, some of which was published. In a sense he was a gadfly promoting the junior college. He was a rapid-fire speaker with a great deal of energy and the common sense to recognize good ideas when they were not his own. He became one of the spokesmen for the junior college, lending the authority of the superintendent's office to his personal campaign.[12]

Besides the IAJC and the office of Public Instruction there were other groups concerned with junior college development. These included the Junior College Advisory Committee to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Illinois Association of School Boards, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Education Association, the Illinois Citizens Education Committee and the School Problems Commission. Each worked on behalf of junior college development, but their efforts were uncoordinated.

When the General Assembly failed to enact any junior college legislation in 1961 Birkhimer became a one man coordinating committee for the various groups interested in junior colleges. "Interim legislation," he wrote, "seems imperative in order that a continuing effort to provide post-high school opportunity will not be hampered by existing or proposed restrictions and that no developments in the years between 1963 and 1965 may later hamper a state plan." With these objectives in mind Birkhimer began in 1961 to develop consensus among the various groups concerned with the orderly development of a statewide system of junior colleges.[13]

While these various groups approached junior college development pragmatically, other efforts were underway in committees and conference rooms. The Higher Education Commission was established in 1954. Purpose of this commission was to formulate plans to provide for both public and private higher education in Illinois. In February 1957, the commission issued a report entitled, "Illinois Looks to the Future in Higher Education," which recommended among other things, extending locally-controlled junior colleges throughout the state in order that every high school graduate would be within commuting distance of such an institution.[14]

In 1957 the General Assembly established a second commission on a permanent basis. In 1959 the commission recommended a full-time junior college consultant to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's staff. Birkhimer occupied this position. In 1960, the commission recommended that an appropriation of $10 million be made for a matching fund for public junior college buildings.[15]

Also, the Committee to Recommend a State Plan for Public Higher Education in Illinois formulated a state plan which was used to introduce legislation in the 1961 General Assembly for establishing a Board of Higher Education. This act (Senate Bill No. 766, 22 August 1961) creating the Board of Higher Education mandated the board to "analyze the present and future aims, needs and requirements of higher education in the state of Illinois and prepare a master plan for the development, expansion, integration, coordination and efficient utilization of the facilities, curricula and standards of higher education." A corollary to the planning mission of the Board of Higher Education was the authority to approve the operating budgets for the various systems in Illinois higher education. This included the approval of state aid to the junior college system. Board of Higher Education budgetary recommendations went to the governor and the General Assembly.[16]

Another group which studied the junior college and helped in development of a public system was the Inter-University Bureau for Junior College Survey, organized in 1960. This survey group stemmed from the Office of Field Services of the University of Illinois College of Education which began in the early '50s. This office produced a good deal of survey work on junior colleges.

In 1960 this work expanded to include representatives from the six state universities together with Northwestern University and the University of Chicago. This bureau provided many feasibility studies on junior colleges, but perhaps most important was that the bureau spread the philosophy of the comprehensive junior college and the need for such institutions in Illinois.[17]

Another study which evoked considerable discussion among junior college people was the McClure study of 1960, named after the chairman and director of the University of Illinois Bureau of Educational Research which produced the survey. There were two main recommendations in the McClure study: first, a state system of junior colleges with state control; and second, a curriculum designed to meet the need for low-cost vocational and technical education within commuting distances of students' homes.

The McClure proposals ignited a furor that lasted for several years and divided the ranks of the Illinois Association of Junior Colleges on the issue of state versus local control. State control meant state establishment, operation, planning and support. Local forces wanted state support and overall state regulation but also local autonomy.[18]

Frustrations of nearly two decades began to dissipate and the tensions and conflicts came together with release of the "Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois," on 2 March 1964. Mandated by legislation, the plan was two years in the making and was developed by a staff under the leadership of Richard Browne and Lyman Glenny. Ten study committees representing a wide spectrum of schools, groups and geographical areas produced the plan. Each study committee was assigned a problem: college enrollments, admission and retention of students, faculty, programs, research, extension and public service, vocational/technical and adult education, physical facilities, financing and junior colleges.[19]

The Provisional Master Plan which was submitted for public hearings and debates at this time was essentially the first of three phases of a comprehensive plan for Illinois higher education. Phase one dealt almost entirely with plans for the establishment of a statewide junior college system. Phase two, released in 1966, placed priority on establishment of more senior state colleges and establishment of health programs; phase three, released in 1970, placed the main priority on establishment of graduate training.[20]

Master Plan One provided for establishment of a state system of junior colleges, enlargement of the state college system through acquisition of existing colleges and projected a future emphasis on commuter rather than residential institutions for junior, senior and master's level work. The plan also recommended that the Illinois Junior College

Board be created to plan and coordinate programs and state aid for the junior colleges. The Junior College Board, though not a governing board, was to have the same relationship to the Illinois Board of Higher Education as the three existing governing boards of four-year colleges.[21]

Support for phase one of the master plan was strong. Three days after the plan was submitted to the Board of Higher Education the proposals were presented to the Illinois Association of Junior Colleges for approval. The association endorsed the plan with few reservations and its legislative committee began drafting legislation to present to the General assembly in 1965. For the next few months public hearings and debates were held throughout the state on the proposals, and the completed document was published in July 1964.[22]

Though support was strong for phase one of the master plan, backing was not universal. Existing junior colleges had reservations. In a letter to Governor Kerner, Dale Collins, president of the Bloom Board of Education, and Henry Nicolai, chairman of the Citizens' Consulting Committee to the Board of Education, wrote that though they approved of a state junior college board, they did not feel that colleges such as Bloom should be "penalized through limitation of state support to current levels and exclusion of such colleges from participation in use of state and federal funds for building purposes."[23]

Administrators of these colleges also held reservations. There was a tendency to object to the loss of authority and prestige that went with the operation of junior colleges. There was also the recognition that tax dollars can go only so far. Many worried about the financial problems resulting from an independent junior college system competing with high school districts for the same dollars. There was also the feeling that the districts that had provided junior college education for 30 years were being left out. "We were concerned," stated Lee Dulgar, dean of Thornton Junior College, "that we were being somewhat ignored and that we had carried the load for a good many years and that we should have a little bigger place in the state system."[24]

Organized opposition to the junior college proposals never materialized, however, A slight danger arose in the General Assembly because the house and senate came out with different bills relating to tuition, state aid and a tax levy to pay the tuition of students attending an out-of-district school. Concerted efforts on the part of Richard Browne, Turner Trimble and Robert Birkhimer, however, smoothed the way to the final bill. The Public Junior College Act was approved 15 July 1965.[25]

The Public Junior College Act established a statewide system of public junior colleges as a part of higher education in Illinois, locally-instituted, controlled and administered. This was provided by an Illinois Junior College Board consisting of eight members appointed by the governor with the superintendent of public instruction serving as an ex-officio member. The Junior College Board functions as a coordinating agency with the boards of public junior colleges as does the Board of Higher Education with the state universities. The Board of Higher Education, or "Board of Boards," performs the same role with regard to junior colleges as it does with senior institutions.[26]

The Public Junior College Act, furthermore, resolved the four problems confronting public junior colleges throughout the early '60s. In terms of finances the law provided for apportionment funding per semester hour which was revised upward in subsequent years. The curriculum would be a "comprehensive junior college program," to include courses in liberal arts and sciences, general education and adult education. At least 15 percent of all courses would be in occupational, semi-technical or technical fields leading directly to employment. One-half of the courses would be in fields other than business education. Special programs for under-education (preparatory, developmental or remedial) were also prescribed as were community and public service programs.[27]

The Junior College Act also resolved the issue of how existing junior colleges would be incorporated into the system. The act created two categories of colleges, Class I and Class II. Class I colleges were to be given preferential treatment. A Class I college would receive more state aid than a Class II institution. A Class I college would receive tuition of $11.50 per semester-hour for every hour that students were enrolled in approved courses for half a semester, whereas a Class II college would receive only $9.50 per semester-hour. Class I colleges would be eligible for state funds to pay for 75 percent of the cost of construction of new campuses while Class II colleges would receive no such aid. In addition, Class I institutions would be eligible for larger amounts of state aid for vocational and technical programs than Class II colleges. So all public colleges were compelled to join the system.[28]

The law placed the junior college system under the Board of Higher Education. Thus there emerged a junior or community college paradox: The more the junior college tended to be higher education, the more it became something else; and the more it tended to be secondary education, the more it became something else.

Getting Started: The First Two Years, 1958-1960

With local approval granted for the establishment of Bloom Community College a target date for opening was set for fall of 1958. But much hard work and several problems needed resolution during the next 16 months. Among these issues were the organization of the college, recruiting a faculty, and providing physical facilities.

Since the college was a creation of Bloom Township High School, the college would be under the control and trusteeship of the high school. At this point there were no provisions for establishing a separate area junior college in Illinois. This development would come within the next two years.

For the next nine years, 15 men and a woman comprised the seven-person board which held the trust and made policy for direction of Bloom Community College. They were: Glenn E. Abel, Paul Ashley, Rufus A. Barackman, Spencer F. Blim, Dominic J. Calacci, Dale Collins, William M. Doherty, Charles C. Donovan Sr., Brenton H. Field, Marvin E. Gavin, Paul H. Keen, John K. Mier, Howard Miller, Blair C. Peterson, Mrs. Dino (Wilhelmina) Pignotti and Paul Rietveld.[29]

Cost of the college, the board hoped, would be borne largely by the raise in educational rate from .75 to .95 of $100 of equalized assessed valuation as provided by the referendum of May 1957 which established the college. With this assessment and state funding, the board expected the college to pay for itself. For the first few years it did.

As superintendent Harold H. Metcalf was the chief administrator of the college but, since the college was to be a separate operation under control of the high school, a separate administration was needed. Albert H. Martin of the high school administrative staff was appointed to serve as dean.

Born in Missouri and a graduate of Southwestern Missouri State University, Martin served in the United States Navy in World War II. Following the war he returned to graduate school at the University of Chicago where he received a master's degree in history before coming to Bloom High School in 1948 as a teacher; he was soon promoted to the administrative staff. "I am confident," stated the superintendent, "that Mr. Martin, serving in his new capacity as dean, will give leadership to a program that will be dynamic and effective."[30]

His confidence was well founded. The rapid development and early accreditation of the college was due in large part to Martin's leadership.[a]

Serving as dean and later as president was an arduous and memorable experience for Martin. "The most rewarding years of my professional career," he stated, "were spent as the dean of faculty at Bloom Community College from 1958 until 1966. I saw the college begin, grow and gain accreditation. I never worked so hard in my life but I enjoyed every minute."[31] He also valued his association with Metcalf. "The person who had the most impact on my professional career," he said, "was Dr. Metcalf. There is no question about that."[32]

Having selected an administrator to plan and direct the college, the next task was selecting faculty. Metcalf and Martin relied on the Koos (Bloom) Report which recommended that teachers have a master's degree in a subject field and have a dual assignment between the high school and college.

Three of the original Bloom Community College faculty relate how they joined the college. "I joined the Bloom Community College faculty," stated H. Robert Andrews who later became a vice president of the college, "somewhat unexpectedly." He continued, "Dr. Metcalf asked the Bloom High School faculty to respond to a note for those who might be interested in joining the college faculty in 1957 when it became obvious that the college would form in 1958 ... But when I did not respond to the note Dr. Metcalf came to me directly and urged me to consider the college assignment. Though he did not threaten me he made it clear that he wanted me to teach in the college. So I accepted a college teaching assignment."[33]

A second original faculty member, Glenn Stehr, explains how he joined the college faculty. "Dr. Metcalf," Stehr said, "invited those interested in the college to apply, I remember him as a strong leader and I suspected that he had given a good deal of thought toward staffing the new institution and he pretty much had the staff in his mind. I applied," he said, "To teach at the new college and on the last day of classes that year, Dr. Metcalf gathered together the new staff to start organizing for the upcoming term. It was at that time that we all found out we were to be on the college staff."[34]

Another original faculty member, Nello Petersanti, tells why he joined the Bloom Community College faculty. "After being a teacher at Bloom High School for many years," he stated, "I felt that Bloom Community College at that time was going to be an outstanding institution which of course it turned out to be, and I felt that I wanted to be a part of that institution."[35] Petersanti taught engineering graphics at the college while serving as chairman of the Industrial Education Department at the high school.

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[a] Metcalf once stated to the author that "the real trick in getting the college off to a strong start was to appoint Albert Martin as dean, then let him run it."

Twelve others joined Andrews, Stehr and Petersanti to form the original faculty at the college. They were: Marjorie Cain, home economics; Thomas Deem, accounting and economic history; Jesse Garrett, English; Annette Gioannini, languages; Bernt Laate (1922-60), physical science and chemistry; Marilyn Lewis, physical education; Raymond Lindstrand, social science; Thomas McKillip (1922-77) English; Harriet Strauss Murray (1906-77) Spanish; Donald Potter, physical education; Richard G. Sherman, history; and Marilou Work, French.[36]

The new faculty attended an all day conference at the University of Illinois in June 1958. At this time, with Illinois higher education in disarray and no statewide junior college system existing, the University of Illinois served as the accrediting office for institutions of higher learning. The conference provided the accrediting officials at the University of Illinois an opportunity to advise on the steps necessary to insure accreditation. Teachers met with their counterparts at the University of Illinois to consider course offerings and ensure articulation. Main emphasis was on the need for Bloom Community College to establish college standards of work at the outset.[37]

There remained the problem of physical facilities. The referendum provided funds for the construction of a building to be used only for the college. Ground was broken in July 1958 but the building would not be completed before the opening of classes in 1959. Meanwhile where would classes be held the first year?

Help came from the First Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church (see Exhibit A). The church rented four classrooms, the church library, a faculty room, men's and women's washrooms and a relocatable building to the college for the first year of operation. The relocatable building originally belonged to the high school but was sold to the church a few years before the college opened. This building served as the social center or student lounge with the dean's office located in one corner. Science laboratories were provided in the high school. [38]

The symbolism of starting a college in a church did not escape purists who recalled the origin of modern universities in the churches and monasteries of the Middle Ages.

In this setting, on 8 September 1958, Bloom Community College held its first classes with 118 students enrolled in the day program. Evening classes also began with 30 students enrolled.[39]

Curriculum and course offerings the first year were entirely transfer courses. When transferred to a four-year college they would lead to a bachelor's degree. These courses were English, French, Spanish, history, social science, mathematics, chemistry, biology, accounting, engineering drawing and physical education.[40]

With completion of the college building, or college center, in the summer of 1959, classes opened in the new building in September 1959. Bloom Community College was unique because it was the first building in Illinois to be built specifically for and occupied by a junior college.

From opening day the college operated essentially on an open-door policy. With few exceptions everybody was welcome. "Essentially," Martin stated, "we stressed the need for a high school diploma or a GED (General Education Development) certificate for those younger students such as late teenagers or those in their early 20s." He continued, "For adults or family heads, however, we did not adhere to this strictly ... A high school age student who had not finished high school was told to complete his high school work. Adults with life experience were allowed to enter."[41]

A profile of the students who enrolled the first semester indicates that the average age was under 20. There were twice as many males as females and the students were largely from Bloom Township. Of the 118 enrolled the first semester, 79 or 66.9 percent were males. Four students were over 21 years of age and 16 paid non-resident fees. Two students attended the first semester on scholarships.[42]

The college grew dramatically the first two years. Daytime enrollment in the fall of 1959 totaled 288, representing a gain of 144 percent, and 200 registered for evening classes, up from 30, representing a gain of 566.6 percent. Males were predominant again, representing 70.4 percent of the students.[43]

Perhaps the most perplexing problem during the first two years was the ambivalent issue of tuition. For years many of the non-Chicago public junior colleges had charged both in-district and out-of-district students a tuition fee. Prior to 1951 that practice had been accepted without question and legally justified by the state. Passage of House Bill No. 472 on 11 July 1951, however, made the public junior colleges a part of the common school system. Then after enactment of the junior college funding acts of 1955 and 1957, lay and professional people alike began to question the justification of a policy that both accepted state reimbursement money and charged tuition.[44]

When Bloom Community College opened, the college was entitled to $200 of state funding for each student per year. There were, however, many students seeking admission to the college who were over 21 years of age and had been out of high school for several years. The first year of college operation these students in the Bloom district were charged $6.67 per semester hour of credit which would be equivalent to the amount the state would reimburse the district if the students were under 21 years of age.[45]

A few months before the college opened, the General Assembly enacted two laws which benefited Bloom Community College. The first was House Bill No. 893 which provided that "any school district maintaining a recognized junior college or providing tuition for pupils in a recognized junior college of some other district...shall be entitled to claim an apportionment for the school year ended on 30 June 1959 and for each school year thereafter of 7.50 for each semester hour in a course completed by each resident pupil in attendance, and any school district maintaining a recognized junior college shall be entitled to such claim for any student that attends."[46] The act meant that Bloom Community College would now be eligible to collect $7.60 state reimbursement for each semester hour taken by any student.

This law had further implications for Bloom Community College. Though the college was a Bloom district institution, out-of-district students from Rich, Crete and Monee were attending. Consequently, the college could charge out-of-district tuition for students from these townships. The state, however, would only fund $7.60 per hour.

The General Assembly in the same session provided relief for districts like Rich, Crete and Monee in Senate Bill No. 192. This law provided that "the board of education of any non-high school district or of any school district maintaining grades 9 to 12 inclusive which does not operate a junior college may provide by resolution, a proposition for the levy of an additional annual tax of not to exceed .175 of full, fair cash value for junior college educational purposes for the payment of tuition or part thereof for any graduate."[47] This meant that Rich, Crete, and Monee districts could levy a tax to pay tuition to send their high school graduates to Bloom Community College.

When the college opened, the district estimated that it cost about $550 to educate a full-time student for two semesters. In view of legislation enacted during the summer of 1959, the college opened its second year by charging out-of-district, or non-resident tuition of $350 for 30 semester-hours of work, which is the equivalent of one year, or $11.66 per semester hour. Adjustments were made for part-time loads.[48]

These tuition charges clearly indicate favoritism toward in-district or Bloom Township students, despite the fact that nearly half the students attending the college after the first two years came from out-of-district.

Industries in the district which paid college fees for their employees were charged on the basis of district residency. This should come as no surprise. The Bloom district built and supported the college and legally its students had to be given preferential treatment. The college was also legally required to charge the difference between per capita cost and state aid to all non-resident students. There is no evidence that tuition charges were ever an issue among out-of-district students. Neither is there any evidence that a single student was ever denied enrollment.

In January 1960 the new building was dedicated. The first commencement took place in the Bloom Township High School Auditorium in June 1960 with 30 graduates receiving Associate in Arts degrees. Bloom Community College was now firmly established.

CHAPTER SIX

BECOMING A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Firmly established and having graduated its first class, Bloom Junior College took resolute steps toward becoming a community college during the early '60s. Huge growth in enrollment led to the installation of many new courses and programs to meet needs of more students. A more critical problem was accreditation without which the college could not operate and fulfill its commitment. The college quickly overcame this hurdle and became more of a community than a junior college by mid-decade. A decision was also soon made to separate from the high school and become a separate college.

More Programs for More Students

The tremendous enrollment growth at Bloom Junior College during the early 1960s was the most noticeable development. Enrollment growth at all U. S. institutions of higher learning, excluding junior colleges, between 1961 and 1965 was 53.3 percent. Growth of Illinois institutions offering at least four-year programs for that period was 62.1 percent. Bloom Junior College enrollment soared the most at 92.5 percent. Daytime enrollment at Bloom zoomed 73.7 percent while night enrollment boomed 124.5 percent. Moreover, the fall enrollment of 1964 represented a gain of 38 percent over the previous year. Though there was never a limit set on enrollment, the administration questioned whether a maximum enrollment should be set.[1]

An "open door" admissions policy could explain some of this growth, but this plan was modified slightly. In 1962 the college began to require American College Testing (ACT) scores from high school graduates seeking admission.[2]

Though the profile of Bloom College students did not vary significantly from the original enrollment during the first several years, there was one major exception. By 1964 the out-of-district enrollment equaled that of the in-district Bloom students. Students from Bloom Township amounted to 50.3 percent of the total. Most of the out-of-district students came from Rich, Crete and Monee townships. At this time there were three foreign students, one each from Korea, Holland and Iran. Otherwise the student profile remained the same as the first year, which was predominantly young males with an average age of 20 years.[3]

Course offerings remained the same as those that had been spelled out by the Board of Education at least nine months before the college opened. "The college", it stated, "...will offer opportunity to all high school graduates to extend their educations and thus increase their competence to live effectively in a free society." The statement continued, "For some, the college will offer opportunities to take courses preparatory to further academic and professional education in other institutions of higher learning. For others, the college will offer terminal education in vocations and semi-professional pursuits. For all, the college will offer basic subjects in general education. Adults will be offered a broad sampling of courses and facilities and staff of the college will intimately relate themselves to life in the community and thus become a cultural center."[4]

The superintendent reiterated the cultural aspect of the college in a speech before the Chicago Heights Council of Parents and Teachers. "The college," he stated, "should become a center of...activity in such fields as art, music, literature and science."[5] In the mind of the superintendent the college would be community centered.

Like most Illinois community colleges, the main emphasis was on the transfer program. Historically, Illinois community colleges emphasized these courses and as late as 1966, liberal arts and sciences enrolled the greatest number of students.[6] In 1964, 82.4 percent of the Bloom College students were enrolled in general education or pre-professional courses.[7]

Throughout its first several years the college continued to graduate between 30 and 35 associate in arts candidates. These graduates succeeded quite well at colleges and universities to which they transferred. A study of 65 Bloom College graduates in 1960 and 1961 revealed that 42 transferred to four-year colleges. Of this number, 24 obtained bachelor's degrees and one completed nurse's training. A comparison of these students' grades with their grades at Bloom College, showed that of the 24 who graduated from a four-year institution, 13 had a higher grade average, 10 were lower, and one had the same grade average.[8] Bloom College was serving its transfer students very well during its early years.

Despite success with the transfer program, some raised concern about the success of other college programs. Enrollments reaching more than 1,000 and graduating classes in the low 30s did not indicate a high proportion of students completing a course of study. What was happening to the majority of students?

The answer to this query was disturbing. Early in 1964, out of 438 students, 39 (8.9 percent) were dropped because of low grades, and 51 others (11.6 percent) were placed on academic probation for low grades.[9] A legitimate question was: Is the open door becoming a revolving door?

Occupational and vocational programs, however, were not neglected. Early in April 1959 a basic management program was started for Ford Motor employees. This was a cooperative program with the Ford Motor Company. In this arrangement, salaried employees attended classes in basic management with Ford paying tuition. These management courses were also available to the general public. Then came the first vocational dental assisting program to be offered at a junior college in Illinois, the only such program apart from the University of Illinois College of Dentistry. The Bloom program began in September 1961 under the direction of Dr. Myron W. Bardige (1913-1965). In June 1962, 12 students became the first certificate recipients at Bloom College. Each one found immediate employment.[10]

The Electronics Technology program came the following year. This program began in the evening with adult students who were employed full-time during the day. Full-time students taking general college courses during the day were also enrolled in this program. In 1964, the Mechanical Technology program began in cooperation with Thornton Junior College. While Thornton concentrated on the design option, Bloom emphasized the production option. Students at both colleges could take the option offered at the other college, and the credits were transferred.[11]

With these programs, Bloom and Thornton colleges began a tradition of cooperation, one of the first in the state. Lee E. Dulgar, dean and first president of Thornton College, comments on this cooperative development. "When Bloom Junior College was organized in 1958," he stated, "and while they were making their plans for opening the school after Al Martin was named dean of the college I was quite new at

Thornton." He continued, "Al and I developed quite a close personal relationship that continued through the years. And I think that helped the relationship between the two schools. Also, Dr. James Logsdon (1905-1984), the superintendent, had a good relationship with Dr. Metcalf at Bloom High School. We did have a friendly relationship rather than a rivalry."[12]

Cooperation between the two colleges was a practical matter, Dulgar indicated, "Principally I think it was to better serve the students," he stated. "In some areas neither school had enough students to form a program. By considering those who desired perhaps a mechanical program or one of the technologies at one center or the other, we could form a class and thereby serve their needs."[13]

In 1964 two other vocational/occupational programs began. One was a two-year secretarial training program. This provided transfer credit and two options: for students desiring stenographic skills, another for those interested in general office skills. The same year a real estate training program began for those wishing to prepare for the Illinois real estate brokers' examination.

Vocational and occupational programs began to develop almost as soon as the college opened and, if their growth was not dramatic, it was steady, community-initiated and cooperative with other community colleges.

The college was also taking steps to provide educational services besides its own courses to the community. Early in 1960, Bloom College was given approval by the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board to offer teacher education programs.[14]

The college also provided cultural leadership in the community. Dean Martin took notice of this in one of his reports. "Bloom Community College," said the dean, "in addition to its regular education program, cooperates with the area in several ways to provide and encourage cultural activities for adults." He continued, "First, the college annually offers adults a Great Books program. The college is also a patron of the Chicago Heights Symphony Orchestra Association. Through its student activity fund it purchases symphony tickets each year, which are made available to students without additional charge. The dean went on, "Bloom students also help collect donations for Channel 11, WTTW. The college also participates in a program of exhibits from the Krannert Art Museum at the University of Illinois, presented each year in the college library. Finally," said the dean, "Bloom College cooperates with the community by providing speakers for civic organizations that require expert opinions on special topics. The purpose of all Bloom's extra-curricular activities is to cooperate with other organizations in providing cultural leadership in the community and to help maintain an outlet for public expression."[15]

The increasing enrollment and addition of new courses created need for more administration and faculty during these first several years. Excluding counselors and librarians, there was no increase in administrators between 1959 and 1964. There were, however, 41 faculty members added during this period, representing a gain of 262.5 percent. Categorically, 22 were added in humanities and social science; seven in mathematics and science; five in business and economics; four in the vocational/technical area; and three in physical education.

These faculty additions were favorable in terms of equal rights for women and civil rights. Of the 42 faculty appointments, 13, or 30.9 percent, were women. This was a favorable breakdown in terms of women teaching at the college level during this period and far exceeded the figure for women faculty members at four-year colleges. Nine of these women, however, were in the humanities and social science area. A master teacher who joined the college at this time makes the point. "In the first few years," she stated, "we were an academic college and we found women really teaching at Prairie State College. We were teaching mostly the traditional courses. We were teaching history and social science. Women were really a part of the college."[16]

In terms of minorities, however, the status was not so favorable. The 41 instructors added between 1959 and 1964 included only one Afro-American, William H. Townsend Jr., (1928-1980). Townsend, appointed in August 1963, was the only black instructor until 1969.

With both faculty and enrollment expanding rapidly there was a need for departmental and subject-matter planning. In August 1964 the faculty was organized into three divisions: Language Arts and Humanities; Social Science and History; and Natural Sciences and Mathematics.[17]

Dual faculty assignments continued. That is, instructors had assignments in the college and the high school. Dual assignments prevented preferential teacher status and simplified contractual arrangements. Dual assignments continued until the college separated from the high school in 1966.

Most classes consisted of less than 30 students. There were, however, large lecture sessions for social science and world history classes. With more than 100 students enrolled in these courses two large-lecture sessions were held each week along with two small-group discussion sessions.

Perhaps the most persistent task confronting the faculty, especially the first two years, was one of creating a college attitude among the students. This was more difficult because most of the faculty had taught many of the college students previously in high school. Students, rather naturally, carried over into the college their high school attitude. Faculty members worked toward solving this problem by addressing students as "Mister" and "Miss" whereas in high school students were addressed on a first-name basis. This method proved effective and after the first two years a college-classroom atmosphere prevailed.

Students services were provided from the beginning. A student lounge was located in the relocatable hut, or "Shack," during the first year. When the College Center was occupied in the fall of 1959, a section at the western end of the building served as the Student Lounge. This location, however, proved inconvenient and led to traffic problems through the library which was located in the large, main room of the building. Weekend dances, or mixers, were held regularly. The Snow Ball Formal was first held in January 1959. This became an annual event for many years.

Student government organized in the fall of 1958, a few weeks after the college opened. Paul Mergenthaler was elected president, Rich Buratto was elected vice president, Carol Weinstein was elected treasurer and a constitution was adopted.[18]

Publications began with the first annual which appeared in the spring of 1959, but it had no name. Later the name *Spectrum* was given the annual. First edition of *The Viking Star*, the student newspaper, appeared in November 1959.[19]

Intercollegiate athletics also began the second year. LaGrange provided opposition in the first basketball game 1 December 1959 which Bloom lost by a score of 69 to 68. In September 1963 the golf team began practice and in the spring of 1965 the baseball team began intercollegiate competition. The first game on 13 April, however, followed the unsuccessful pattern of the basketball team as Bloom lost to Wright by a score of 3 to 0.[20]

Scholarship and academic achievement were fostered as well. From the beginning, Bloom College attracted students of high academic achievement. The first class included students who ranked among the top six in their respective high school graduating classes. In recognition of scholastic achievement the Nu Sigma chapter of Phi Theta Kappa was established 12 January 1965. Five original members of the Bloom College chapter were: James Amiorati, Rufus Bradford and Frank Gereg, sophomores; and Audrey Kendall and Marion Senger, freshmen. This National Junior College Honor Society was established in 1929 by the American Association of Junior and Community Colleges as a scholarship fraternity and a junior college equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa. Thomas McKillip (1922-1977), a winner of Phi Beta Kappa honors at the University of Iowa, served as the first faculty adviser.

The first institutional ceremony was commencement in June 1960. Before this the college adopted a flag, chose its school colors of red and white and selected the Vikings as a mascot name. "Knowledge for Life" was chosen as the college motto.

Students were not without scholarships and loan funds. During the first year the Bloom Board of Education provided seven scholarships to cover non-resident tuition, two each in the Homewood-Flossmoor district and the Rich Township district; and one each in the Crete-Monee, Beecher and Bremen districts. The Philip Prescendo Memorial Scholarship was available in 1964 as were four scholarships provided by the Manufacturers Association of Chicago Heights made on the basis of need, character, scholastic average and leadership qualities. Titles II and III of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (Public Law 85-864) also provided funds for student loans for study in the areas of foreign languages and science or technology.

In addition there were work scholarships available. No cash payments were awarded for these, but students were provided full tuition for working five hours a week as laboratory, library and office assistants.[21]

A glimpse of student life can be gleaned from the first issue of *The Viking Star*, in which the student president commented. "The Bloom Community College Constitution," he stated, "is well written...and there will be very good student participation towards all goals." He did express several objections, however. "The library is definitely lacking in materials which should be added as rapidly as possible," he stated. He was quite concerned about the cafeteria where he felt that "college students should be able to eat a hot lunch." He was disturbed about support for the college newspaper and annual. He was displeased that with 210 students, "the school could not sell 150 annuals. This shows that the students do not have enough spirit, initiative and enthusiasm." Some of these objections persisted as the college developed through the first two decades.[22]

Though student sentiment was not strong enough to warrant demonstrations, Vietnam was beginning to draw attention by the middle '60s. Students expressed strong support for the war. The student newspaper posed the question: "What do you think of the United States being in Vietnam?" to six male students. All answered strongly in the affirmative. One answered, "The advance of communism in Vietnam must be stopped by bombing Hanoi directly if necessary. The loss of American lives in Vietnam is completely unnecessary. A prolonged conflict of this type is unnecessary. This conflict must be won, but it must be won quickly and decisively."[23]

Vietnam, however, was far away, and a more pressing concern was the student lounge. One problem was allowing students to play cards in that location. Administrative regulations against card-playing were objectionable to some students. In a "Letters to the Editor" column, a student opined, "Bloom Community College is not an advanced high school and the sooner the administration allows the student to accept some responsibility on his own, the better it will be for all concerned. Then and only then can Bloom Community College become a true institution of higher learning."[24] Bloom Community College students were hardly unusual.

Two persistent perennial problems plagued the college during the first several years. First was the matter of physical facilities. Although the college moved into the College Center for the second year, classes were still held in the First Christian Church and the high school. Some relief came when the chemistry laboratory and student lounge annex was completed for the opening of classes in the fall of 1961. This relief was short-lived, however, due to rapidly-rising enrollments at both the college and high school. Overcrowding at the high school forced the college out of some of the high school classrooms, thus crowding available space at the college.[25]

Then there was the constant economic problem of operations. Financial support throughout the first several years continued to come from three major sources. First were the tax funds. Second was tuition charged to students. To meet rising costs tuition was raised. In the spring of 1960, tuition was set a $50 per semester for full-time, in-district students, while out-of-district tuition remained at $11.66 per semester hour. Some students, however, were allowed to attend at regular in-district rates. An activity fee of $10 was adopted the same time.[26]

A third source of revenue was State of Illinois reimbursement or funding. These funds for the most part were matching funds per semester hour of credit. This type of aid worked rather well for most courses in the arts and sciences or transfer programs. But community colleges like Bloom were moving into the vocational/technical areas. Here reimbursement on a credit-hour basis was hardly equitable since these courses were more expensive to operate.

Bloom and other community colleges received a welcomed boost with passage of the Vocational Education Act 18 December 1963 (Public Law 88-210). This law authorized federal grants to states "to assist them to maintain, extend and improve existing programs of vocational education."[27]

The Vocational Education Act was important to community colleges for several reasons. Not only did the law provide funds but the act removed the onus of vocational/technical courses being "less than" college grade which had been the case with earlier legislation. This act of 1963 also concentrated on the "training needs of people rather than on preparation for specific occupation." Occupational education then surged forward in colleges like Bloom and swept into other community colleges in a fashion dreamed of and pleaded for but never before realized by vocational advocates.

Though funds were available, arriving at equitable guidelines for vocational programs remained an issue. "For example," wrote Dean Martin, "a program that is 50 percent reimbursable by refunds obtained from the Board of Vocational Education has not been reimbursed 50 percent for the total costs of offering the program. Also, it would not always be true that even a 66.6 percent reimbursement would represent half the cost of offering the program."[28] Still, with funds available, guidelines were easier to overcome.

More financial relief came through federal grants resulting from passage of Public Law 89-329 (The Higher Education Act 8 November 1965). A serious problem that Bloom College faced was meeting library standards in terms of volumes held. The Women's Club of Chicago Heights had provided funds to help replenish the college library's holding of volumes. More strength was needed in this direction, and the college helped resolve the problem with a federal loan under Title II of the Higher Education Act.[29]

Financial relief came in yet another way during the '60s. Though the high school and the college were unable to pass referendums to raise the tax levy, the equalized assessed valuation increased. From 1961 through 1971 assessed valuation increased $290.9 million, or 73.2 percent, compared with a 44.8 percent increase in population.[30]

Obtaining Accreditation and Making Hard Decisions

High on the list of priorities for the college was accreditation. Learning for the sake of learning is its own reward and perhaps one of the most noble of life's pursuits, but in the real world certification and acceptance of educational training is imperative to employment and professional advancement. An educational institution that does not attain accreditation is doomed before it takes the vow. So Bloom College took early steps in this direction.

When the college opened the University of Illinois served as the accrediting office for junior colleges in Illinois. With the appointment of a junior college consultant to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in July 1959, standards for junior colleges moved in this direction. In April 1960 the University of Illinois announced the discontinuance of its accreditation policy. The university would then only accept "the accredited status accorded institutions by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools or by one of the agencies recognized by the National Commission on Accrediting."[31]

During the winter of 1959-1960, the secretary of the North Central Association planned a number of conferences for unaccepted Illinois junior colleges which, at this time, amounted to many. These meetings carefully outlined the purposes and goals of the North central Association.

North Central accreditation begins with the assumption that an institution is the best judge of its own strengths and weaknesses, and when these shortcomings are corrected or improved upon, the institution should be accredited. Perhaps Plato, the ancient Greek philosopher, stated the assumption best: "The unexamined life is not worth living." Thus the accreditation process begins with an institution conducting its own self-study.[32]

During the summer of 1960 a steering committee was appointed to begin the self-study for Bloom Community College. This committee prepared questionnaires to obtain data during the 1960-1961 school year. Answers to these questions and other data were submitted 15 May 1961 to the North Central Association, and Bloom College was granted Candidate for Membership status 1 July 1961.[33]

The accreditation of Bloom Community College provides a case study in concerted and cooperative effort on the part of everyone associated with the college. During the 1961-1962 academic year a tentative outline of the report was developed, and faculty committees, which coincided to some degree with the self-study committees, were assigned to write parts of the report. There were nine committees: description of the community;

history and purposes; the educational task; resources; institutional organization; curriculum; faculty; student life; and student achievement. A separate committee edited and revised the material in such fashion as to provide an element of unity and clarity to the entire report.

Upon receipt of the report the North Central Association consultant noted three areas of concern. First there was a need for more full-time faculty with night assignments to be included as a part of the regular teaching staff. Second was a shortage of library volumes. Holding 4,000 titles, the college fell far short of the minimum of 6,000 volumes needed for a junior college. Third area of concern was financing. The cost of the college operation borne by students compared to the cost borne by the college district was much too high. Also in the financial area there was a need for a separate accounting system and budget for the college. "Generally," the consultant stated, "the report was good." On 13 August 1964 the board accepted the document which was submitted to the North Central Association.[34]

In less than seven months, in what may be record-time for approval of a junior college, on 31 March 1965 the North Central Association accredited Bloom Community College "as an associate degree-granting institution." There was the provision, however, that a consultant be assigned and a reexamination made at the end of a three-year period. The commission noted significant progress at the college. Concern was expressed, however, "regarding the need for greater faculty identification with the college, for greater participation of division chairmen in administrative matters, for more adequate library facilities, for the development of a master plan and for 'in depth' curriculum development in many areas." There were several areas of strength cited in the report such as the "quality of instruction, faculty service, financial resources, quality transfer programs and limited but effective terminal programs."[35]

Accreditation meant that the college was recognized throughout the country, and credits earned would be accepted in transfer to four-year colleges. Furthermore, because of their combined efforts and cooperation the entire college personnel shared and took pride in the achievement. For Dean Martin it was the apogee of his service at Bloom College. "If I had to select one thing," he stated, "as the most satisfying for me at Bloom College it would have to be North Central accreditation."[36]

While all those concerned with the fortunes of the college waited anxiously for the thrilling news of accreditation, action was taking place elsewhere which would present more problems and hard choices. Conferences were taking place in Springfield to prepare legislation to be introduced for creation of an Illinois junior college system.

In January 1965 it was no secret that legislation would be introduced during the 74th General Assembly to create a statewide system of junior colleges. The subject of whether the high school district should continue running Bloom Community College or whether the college should go into the state system was discussed at the board meeting 14 January 1965. "Close attention," the board recorded, "will be given to action of the state legislature in the current session."[37]

Martin kept the board informed of the rapidly-moving events taking place on the junior college front. "It was evident," he stated, "that there are three trends in the junior college movement that account for junior colleges becoming perhaps the most dynamic aspect of American education today." He continued, "The first trend is growth. A second trend in junior college education is their comprehensiveness. For several decades after their origin junior colleges were thought of, and thought of themselves as transfer institutions only. Now, literally hundreds of vocational/technical terminal curricula are being offered as legitimate courses in post-high school education in junior colleges. A third trend is their independence. The historical relationship of the junior colleges to the secondary or unit school districts is gradually receding. New junior colleges in nearly all states are being organized as completely separate institutions."[38]

Implications of the Public Junior College Act (15 July 1965) were pointed out to the board shortly after the law was enacted. The dean reported, "I feel that at best the next few years are going to be uncomfortable ones for all who are involved in junior colleges in Illinois. Decisions are not going to be easily made..."[39] The hard question for the board to decide was whether the college should be separated from the high school or continue to be operated by the high school district.

The transition of superintendents of Bloom Township High School at this time further complicated the issue of separation. After 17 years as head of the district Harold H. Metcalf retired in August 1965. For nearly two decades he had provided strong educational leadership. The college itself came into being under his direction along with his lieutenant, Albert H. Martin. Having done much to establish the college under the high school aegis, Metcalf had reservations about separating the college. But he was leaving. That decision would come under other leadership.

Richard E. Barnhart succeeded him. Holding the degree of Doctor of Education from Indiana University, Barnhart came to Bloom from the superintendency of the Grand Forks, N.D., public school district. He took over leadership of the Bloom high school district in August 1965, just at the time that hard decisions were needed about the future of Bloom Community College. Martin, however, remained at the helm of the college thus insuring continuity and leadership in that respect.

Two types of public junior colleges existed in Illinois while legislation was being drawn up for creating a statewide system in 1964 and 1965. First were the existing colleges like Bloom, Danville, Elgin, Thornton, Morton and the Chicago system and those under the control of high school districts. Then there were the newer colleges like Triton and Rock Valley which had formed recently as independent college districts. To distinguish between the two types of colleges and provide an orderly process for bringing them all together into a state system, the existing colleges were designated as Class II and the newer ones were designated Class I. It was simply a matter of semantics but the labels were almost immediately interpreted to be "first class" and "second class."[40]

The Junior College Act prescribed requirements for each category. A Class II college like Bloom could continue to operate under control of the high school, but the high school board would be required to elect its own officers for the college, maintain a separate college budget and administer the college as a separate institution. Furthermore, the high school district was required to levy a separate tax for college operations. Class II colleges would be eligible for state funding but this funding would be less than for Class I institutions.

The main distinction between a Class I and Class II college was that a Class I college would be completely independent and would have its own board. There were also minimum standards of population and tax base with a potential enrollment of 2,000 students within five years. In either case a separate tax levy would be required.

The decision was quite clear albeit difficult for the board. Either the district could continue to operate the college, or the college could be allowed to separate, form its own board and operate as an independent institution. One board member, Mrs. Dino (Wilhelmina) Pignotti, remembered the difficulties in creating the college in 1957. Others were aware of this sentiment. Separation would be hard. Nevertheless, the board decided to let the college go and on 13 January 1966 resolved "that Bloom proceed at once to make the necessary applications for Class I status."[41]

Implications of separation soon became clear to the Bloom board. Two weeks after the decision for separation, Board President Dale Collins posed a number of questions regarding Bloom College. "Decisions must be made," he stated, "regarding tuition, possibly moving the college to another location, buying or obtaining an option on land, assigning staff and personnel, providing a larger college and additional classrooms for next year."[42] The first step, however, was to establish a separate tax levy for the college.

This important decision haunted the college for more than a decade as it strived to meet the ravages of inflation. On 22 March 1966, the board resolved that "there is hereby levied upon the full, fair cash value as equalized or assessed...a tax rate of .09% for junior college educational purposes and a...tax rate of .03% for junior college building purposes."[43]

For the next 12 years critics argued that the board made a mistake by levying such a low tax rate. This argument took on weight as the college sought to raise this levy many times without success. Though costs were rising inflation had not yet begun to ravage the American economy to anywhere near the extent of a decade later. The board had no way of foreseeing this onslaught. The board desired to protect the taxpayers with a conservative levy. Board President Dale Collins stated when the levy was made that "we do not want to be greedy. We hope that by setting an original rate that will sustain the operation of the college, the community will respond favorably when we might have to seek an increase later."[a] Unfortunately when the college sought a raise in the tax levy on several occasions during the next decade the voters failed to remember the board's original consideration to spare their pocketbooks. They rejected several tax-rate increases.

Having established the tax rate the next step was to obtain approval of the constituents or taxpayers. This could be done either by direct amendment or referendum, or by the "back-door" amendment, a less direct approach. Procedure for the back-door amendment required legal publication of the tax rate to the effect that the new rate would become effective unless within 30 days a petition was filed with the board signed by not less than 10 percent of the voters in the district requesting that the proposition of the new levy be presented to the voters. Otherwise the new tax levy would become effective immediately. The board decided on the back-door amendment. Reasoning was that the board believed support of the college was so strong it would be a needless waste of time and money to go directly to the people. Thus, if there was opposition it would need to be organized quickly.[44]

Because of a legal technicality two attempts at a back-door amendment were needed. The first notice was published on a Sunday which raised legal reservations. So a second notice was published on a weekday. In neither case was a petition presented in opposition. A step that should have taken only a month took two months while college supporters held their breath that opposition, which might have been dormant on the first attempt, would suddenly arise.

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[a] The author attended this board meeting on another matter. His memory of this issue is quite clear.

Two more procedural steps were taken at a special board meeting on 3 June 1966 before the college could become a Class II institution. First was to adopt the tax levy as there had been no opposition; and second was that the college become a Class II institution with the board being organized with different officers. With this action Bloom Community College became a Class II institution for less than two weeks.[45]

Three more actions completed the transition from a Class II to a Class I junior college. On 16 June 1966 the Illinois Junior College Board, in response to the original request of 26 January 1966 and subsequent action, accepted "Bloom Community College for organization as a Class I junior college district." On 21 June the Cook County superintendent of schools acknowledged receipt of this action. On 14 July the Bloom Township High School Board adopted a resolution "to cease control over said junior college, in order that it may classify as a Class I Junior College."

The deed was done after six months. The college now was on its own and would be known officially as Illinois Junior College District No. 515. The district that had cradled and nurtured the college no longer controlled the institution. All ties were severed within the next year.[46]

While the struggle was being waged for accreditation and acceptance as a Class I college, the commitment of the college continued. The day-to-day problems of operation persisted as enrollments grew, graduates were completing their courses of study, faculty increased, curriculums expanded and costs increased.

Overall enrollments grew rapidly between 1964 and 1966 with daytime enrollment increasing the most. The day enrollment in these two years grew 78.5 percent from 438 in 1963 to 782 in 1965. Night enrollment during the same period increased 42.6 percent from 417 in 1963 to 595 in 1965. At the same time, however the full-time equivalency (the total number of hours taken by all students divided by 15 hours) increased only 22.4 percent or slightly more than one-third of the overall enrollment gain. Graduates remained constant over these two years with 32 associate in arts degrees granted in each of the two years.[47] These figures indicate that though the college was growing in terms of enrollment more students were taking less hours and fewer were completing transfer degrees.

Increased enrollment required more faculty; thus, 17 instructors were added between 1964 and 1966. The humanities and social science area increased its instructors by five, and the vocational/technical area added four. Three each were added to the mathematics/science and business/economics sections while two additional counselors joined the college staff. During the first six months of 1966 while the transition of the college to a separate institution was underway, faculty assignments became an issue because of the number of teachers with dual assignments. A transition period of two full school years was recommended to "give both the high school and the college continuity of all programs."[48]

Along with growth of faculty came the need for cohesion among the teaching staff, so a College Faculty Association was organized in June 1966. Purpose of the Faculty Association was "to represent faculty opinions concerning formulation of goals, curriculum, student policies, faculty policies and the welfare of the faculty of the college." In conjunction with the association, the Faculty Senate was organized "to direct the affairs of the Faculty Association." The original Senate consisted of nine members.[49]

The first administrative additions to the college also came between 1964 and 1966. From the beginning the dean was the only administrator at the college. But at this time an assistant business manager was appointed as were directors for instructional services, student personnel, dental assisting and nursing.

Curriculum continued to broaden. In the fall of 1965 the college offered a three-hour course in American Negro history for the first time. In the fall of 1966 the two-years associate degree program in nursing began. In the early 1950s the Columbia University School of Nursing began a two-year nursing program to meet the shortage of nurses. This movement took hold in Illinois during the 1960s. Bloom College was one of several junior colleges in the nation to begin a nursing program at this time.[50]

The college extended its community services during these two years also. Saturday morning classes were implemented so students could take a full program in the evening and on Saturday. And workshops were held to bring about improvement of instruction in the social studies field under provisions of the National Defense Act.[51]

The perennial problem of costs continued. Expenses were increasing. With enrollments growing, limited space compelled serious consideration of giving priority to in-district students. So applications of students from outside the Bloom district were not processed as quickly as those in the district. "We will not turn down any students in our own district," said the dean, "except those dismissed for academic reason." A registration fee was also assessed, but this was applied to tuition when the student enrolled. Furthermore, the Junior College Act compelled a slight modification in the tuition charges. Thus tuition was computed on the basis of a charge for each semester hour which necessitated the lowering of tuition from $6 per semester hour to $5 per semester hour for all students during the 1966-1967 school years.[52] Still, there is no evidence that any qualified student desiring to enroll was denied.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BREAKING AWAY AND FORGING A COMMUNITY

To the casual observer there was little if any difference in Bloom Community College from previous years when students gathered in August 1966 to register for fall classes. Physical facilities were the same. Since opening in 1958, the college operated largely in the First Christian Church and the College Center building, with a few classes held in Bloom High School. Within a few weeks, however, noticeable changes began taking place and as the academic year continued, the community became aware of other changes as the college, now a separate and independent institution, began moving in different directions.

A Year of Transition, 1966-1967

For several weeks in early summer 1966 the governance of Bloom Community College was in limbo. On 9 June the college became Illinois Junior College District 515. On 1 July the Junior College Act became effective and Bloom College was under its own control as of 14 July. Dean Martin was named President of the College on this date.[1]

Thus the college was prepared to begin operations without interruption. At first, Martin was the only administrator but larger enrollments demanded additional administrative help. Martin named Brian Knight, a former faculty member, as business manager. He also added four directors: Bruce Enselman, also a former faculty member, as Director of Instruction and Curriculum and Director of the Evening School; Eugene Pint as Director of Admissions and Student Personnel Services; Dr. Dan E. Herrold, Director of Dental Assisting; and Phyllis Welnetz, Director of Nursing. The faculty was also increased. An addition of 11 had enlarged the faculty to more than 50. Opening of fall classes was hardly in jeopardy due to the transition to an independent college.

Though machinery was in place to open and operate the college large problems loomed ahead. Most immediate was that of selecting a board of trustees.

A traditional concept in American education holds that a lay board should represent the people in the governing of a college. Public education has used elected boards to reflect the collective will and wisdom of the people since earliest times. Ideally, the board is the bridge between college and community, translating community needs for education into college policies and protecting the college from unwarranted external demands.[2]

Responsibilities of a governing board, according to the Association of Community College Trustees, include selecting evaluating, and terminating the president; ensuring professional management of the institution; purchasing, constructing and maintaining facilities; defining the role and mission of the college; engaging in public relations; preserving institutional independence; evaluating institutional performance; creating a climate for change; insisting on being informed; engaging in planning; and assessing board performance.[3] When the Junior College Act became effective 1 July 1966, Bloom College did not have a board. Thus selection of a governing board as quickly as possible was of paramount importance.

Under the Junior College Act (1965) an Illinois Community College Board was regulated under terms of the School Code. The junior college system was included in higher education but the governing board was regulated by provisions of the common schools. Apparently the junior colleges were in both places and the paradox was confirmed.

This school code called for seven board members holding terms of office for three years. If at least 15 percent and no more than 30 percent of the population was in an unincorporated (rural) area one board member must live in an unincorporated area.

To facilitate selection of the original Bloom College Board, the Citizens Consulting Committee provided assistance. Since 1961 this 25-member group had operated in the Bloom district as a continuing committee to influence school administration and policy. To assist in the selection of a college board the Citizens Consulting Committee selected 16 representatives from the community's civic and fraternal organizations to form a Committee for the Organization of a Junior College Board for Bloom Township. This group produced a slate of nine candidates.[4] Some of these candidates sought a place on the slating. One was Dale Collins, a junior college graduate himself and a graduate of Northwestern University Medical School. For several years Collins had served as president of the Bloom High School Board.

"While there on the Bloom board," Collins stated, "the transition period was beginning toward a statewide system of junior colleges. It was a natural thing that I continue on to the junior college because I had experience with the junior college in my own life and education, and I felt very strongly that I could give some personal input into a junior college and some of the things I had felt as a junior college student should be changed. So I think that it was a personal thing ... that I had the opportunity to do something to improve junior college education, and it seemed like a rewarding thing for me personally ... It seemed an exciting time in a transition of the junior college system from a local community college to part of a larger statewide organization ... I also felt that there should be some continuity among the board of trustees to carry over from the Bloom High School to the community college and I felt I could do that fairly well."[5]

Some candidates sought slating while others were solicited and agreed to have their names placed on the slate. Nine candidates ran for seven positions.

On 13 August 1966 in "one of the lowest turnouts in years" for a school election, seven candidates were elected. Only 1,208 ballots were cast, showing strong neighborhood voting patterns.

Rev. H. D. Cockerham, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Chicago Heights, polled the highest total. Though he led in only four precincts, Rev. Cockerham rolled up huge pluralities in the city's two East side precincts and two precincts in East Chicago Heights (Ford Heights). Collins, however, drew area-wide support, leading in 10 out of 23 precincts and tying in four others. The other candidates showed vote-getting ability in the areas where they resided.[6]

The remaining five members elected to the original Board of Bloom Community College were Henry Nicolai, a department manager of a national retail store; Edward A. Opila (1919-1986) and F. Carr Price, both engineers in two large industrial plants; H. Robert Sauer, a specialty-shop store owner; and Cornelius Verduin (1911-1972), a farmer representing the unincorporated area.

Four days after the election the new Board of Bloom Community College met in the College Center for the first time. In this organizational meeting, the board elected Dale Collins chairman and Edward A. Opila secretary. Terms of office were determined by the drawing of lots. This provided for staggered terms. Collins and Cockerham drew one-year terms; Sauer and Opila drew two-year terms; and Nicolai, Price and Verduin drew three-year terms. As a newly-formed college there had been no time to formulate policy. But since the college had operated for nine years under the high school it was moved "that the board adopt the policies of District 206 as they relate to faculty and students until such time that changes are recommended or required."[7] With these actions the college had a governing board. Administration and faculty were in place and the college looked to the opening of the fall semester in a few weeks.

President Martin submitted his resignation at the next meeting of the college board, shocking the community. Martin had served as the principal administrator of the college since the beginning with consummate skill. There had been no sign of dissatisfaction on anyone's part. The explanation was simple. "I wish at this time," Martin wrote, "to submit my resignation as president of Bloom Community College. I have been offered a position as a staff member of the Illinois Junior College Board. As a member of the staff I shall have responsibilities relating to junior college programs and instruction for the State of Illinois ... I have the greatest respect for Bloom and the Bloom community. My resignation does not indicate dissatisfaction with my present position. I believe, however, the position I am now taking represents an opportunity for me to make a contribution to the junior college movement in Illinois which I do not wish to forego."[8]

That the Illinois Junior College Board desired Martin should come as no surprise. He had been a strong leader in establishing Bloom Community College, the 12th public junior college in Illinois and the 19th one to join the Illinois system. He was well acquainted with the Illinois junior college picture through the Illinois Junior and Community College Association which he was president of at that time. For the Illinois Junior College Board it was an excellent choice. For Bloom Community College it was a blow because it left the institution without a president at a time when it was getting underway as an independent institution facing many troublesome problems.

With classes scheduled to begin in a few days an interim appointment seemed imperative. Aware of this predicament, Martin consulted with former superintendent Harold Metcalf, then on the staff at the University of Chicago. It was decided to recommend the appointment of Richard G. Sherman of the college faculty.

Sherman was a long-time faculty member of Bloom High School, having joined the staff in 1952. He was an original college faculty member and was serving as chairman of the Social Science Division. He had the respect of the faculty, and though short on administrative experience, his long association with the college insured familiarity and knowledge of the institution and its problems. He held the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in history from the University of Iowa. The board was satisfied with his qualifications for an interim appointment but insisted that Sherman submit an application, if interested.

In his application Sherman stated that there was one main reason for seeking the appointment. "At this time," he stated, "Bloom College will soon be without a head at a critical time in its infancy. Fortunately, President Albert H. Martin has led and directed the college wisely and well. The institution, however, must not lose its direction nor its vision at this time." In closing he added: "I propose, that my appointment begin as of 1 October 1966, and run through 30 June 1967, with the condition that, if I wish, I shall be allowed to apply for the permanent appointment of president of Bloom College without prejudice." This last statement caused the board to hesitate briefly. The board did not want the appointment to carry any commitment beyond a year. The applicant, however, desired no prior commitment and assumed the office.[9]

Perhaps the most troublesome problems at that time related to the business operation of the college. The college had its own capable Brian Knight as business manager. A separate institution, however, required a separate budget. The first budget for the college ($908,000) was adopted in September without a single taxpayer attending the final hearing. Within a few years, however, this changed abruptly as community awareness of and concern for the college grew rapidly.

The Illinois junior college system prescribed and required its own accounting procedures. In the early transition, Alfred S. Odegard, assistant superintendent of business affairs at Bloom High School, served as treasurer for college funds, but the legality of this operation was questioned until a college treasurer could be appointed. Payrolls could no longer be issued on high school checks. Because of a delay in getting new college checks printed, the first payday was actually a day late. With the exception of one faculty member who threatened legal action, everyone accepted the delay with grace.

The most difficult business problem confronting the college during the first year was division of property assets between the high school and the college. Though the high school owned the College Center building, only the college utilized the equipment and material in the building, which meant that under terms of the Junior College Act, the college did not have to pay rent for the building. On the other hand, the college had utilized high school classrooms and facilities without charge since the college began and was clearly beholden to the parent high school under whose guidance it had been spawned.

Negotiations continued for several months between the two institutions. Committees representing each of the two met several times. From the college point of view "it was generally agreed that any arrangement decided upon should protect the interests of the taxpayers of the district and assure the financial integrity of both the high school and the college districts."[10] At times these sessions grew strained as tensions mounted. Harsh words were exchanged.[a] A high school board member reminded the college head that "the high school started the college and without the high school there would have been no college and the high school had its entitlements." On the other hand the college head urged that the high school not cripple the college unnecessarily at a critical time while the institution was trying to get started on its own resources.

After several months of negotiations assets were settled in January 1967. Bloom High School paid the college $300,000 and in turn the college paid back to the high school $120,000 for rent and services. Other amounts, which the high school had already transferred to the college, were assessed and subtracted from the remaining $180,000. These amounts were essentially physical and tangible assets. The settlement was weighted against the college. Interests of the taxpayers of the high school district had been protected as well as the financial integrity of the high school. The financial integrity of the college may not have been damaged, but was not enhanced either. The significant result for the college was no longer being beholden to the high school for physical facilities or services.[11]

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[a] For the interim president this problem proved the most vexing of his term in office. What had always been a large family when the high school and college were under one board, became at times an adversarial contest. For him it was a sobering experience.

The lack of physical facilities to accommodate the growing enrollment and installation of new programs presented another problem in the year of transition. In December 1967 the Wallace House was condemned by city officials as unsafe, leaving the Dental Assisting program without space. Arrangements were made with St. James Hospital for a portion of the sixth floor to house the displaced dental program. To provide needed classroom space agreements were arranged with the First Christian Church and with Temple Anshe Sholom in Olympia Fields. Space was also found in the Bloom Market center for the college bookstore. Three relocatable buildings were purchased for faculty offices east of the College Center.[12] Later it was learned that this purchase was questionable under the Junior College Act but the matter was concluded without litigation or harm to any parties.

For administrative offices the college found space on the second floor of a building on Chicago Road. This procurement later proved embarrassing when it led the college innocently into proximity with organized crime.

Enroute to offices on the second floor an administrator observed what appeared to be a stock securities office on the first floor but upon close observation noticed that stocks posted on the board actually did not exist. Later the place was exposed as a front for a "juice loan" operation. The proprietor was listed in the press as one of the region's leading members of organized crime. For two weeks a College Police Institute held classes on the second floor directly above the illicit operation. Members of the College Women's Club later shrieked with horror when they learned that they had been holding meetings in a room above the questionable operation. The operator later met an untimely death in a gangland-style assassination.

Finding space for operating was one thing but not being able to operate was another problem which weather forced upon the college late in January 1967.

The storm began around 5:00 A.M. and continued all day, heaping streets and driveways with snow several feet deep. The college closed at noon. At 3:30 P.M. the president left the college and reached home nearly four hours later, a distance of six miles. Many people did not reach home for days. The business manager of the college remained snowbound in the College Center for three days. For the first and only time in its quarter of a century the college completely shut down the next day (Friday) and the following Monday. Snow fell for 29 hours without stopping. Consensus held that it was the worst snow storm on record in the area.[13]

Despite these pressing problems the curriculum expanded with new programs in several areas. In December 1966 the Computer Technology Advisory Committee was introduced and a computer was leased with an option for future modifications and systems. In January 1967 the Dental Hygiene program was approved, and in April a music program and theater program were approved. In May 1967 the first Police Institute was held. Success of this program subsequently led to the Police Science program installed a few years later.[14]

Response to community needs and cooperation with other junior colleges in the region, which had been hallmarks of the college since the beginning, continued. The college participated along with Thornton Junior College in the South Suburban Manpower Survey to learn what occupational and technical programs were needed in the region. The college also entered into a chargeback reciprocity arrangement with Thornton Junior College to accommodate about 90 percent of the anticipated out-of-district students for 1967-1968.[15]

Faculty and administrative relations, for the most part, were cooperative during the first year of separation. During this year 16 teachers held dual assignments in the high school and college, and they were given the choice of either staying with the high school or joining the college full-time in 1967-1968. Thirteen of the 16 teachers chose to join the college.

At this time there existed a strong esprit de corps among the faculty and administration. Bruce Enselman, an early faculty member and later an administrative staff member, described the feeling. "I think," Enselman stated, "that the college probably experienced its highest peak very close to the time of the separation from the high school." He continued, "I felt a great joy that we would be able to become a separate institution and was looking forward a great deal to possibly becoming a community college for this area. It was a great feeling." Another early faculty member, William E. Patton, expressed similar sentiments. "When we became an independent college," he stated, "throughout the staff there was a feeling like we were on a frontier. There was a dynamic, growing, progressive group because the junior college was a new idea in the state and we were part of a new movement."[16]

There was a time of tension, however, in the spring of 1967 when faculty salaries were being negotiated. Since the faculty would be completely under college control beginning in the fall of 1967 the college was responsible for a salary schedule. The issue was complicated because a large share of the faculty came from the high school; the hard question was how high school experience would be translated onto a college salary schedule. That is, how many years of high school experience were equal to one year of college experience? Again the junior or community college paradox came into play. Senior college faculty are compensated on the basis of rank; but high school faculty are compensated on a salary schedule based largely on terms of experience. Negotiations between several faculty leaders and the president produced a salary schedule similar to that of a high school and this was accepted for the 1967-1968 year.

Student services continued to expand. For several years Bloom College students attended Chicago Heights Symphony Orchestra concerts free with their activity tickets. This was accomplished when the college guaranteed the symphony a sum from the activity ticket funds. In addition to the five local symphony concerts, Bloom students attended one concert of the world-renowned Chicago Symphony, held in the Bloom High School Auditorium. The first student drama production, "Tom Jones," was presented during the year and the appointment of Richard F. Peterson as director of theater assured future stage productions of high quality. A wrestling program was installed in October 1966, adding to the intercollegiate athletic program.[17]

As in any student body, there were some concerns. There was anxiety about the lack of student interest in school dances. The disparity between male and female students in the student body seemed to be the problem. At least, male students alluded to this in student publications. One stated that "many male students feel that the biggest blockade to a more swinging Bloom Community College is the lack of eligible female coeds. This problem, although apparent, should not significantly hamper the possibilities of a better social life at the college."[18]

Of more concern to the college, however, was student unrest arising over parking space. Since the college opened in 1958 students had been allowed to park their cars in the Wallacetown Shopping Plaza across Dixie Highway. Under new management in September 1966, the shopping plaza refused to allow students to park cars in the plaza and began to issue parking tickets. Compounding the edict, a restaurant frequently patronized by students instituted a minimum charge about the same time. Riled and indignant, students began to protest. Rallies were held in the student lounge, and a threat was issued to demonstrate in the plaza. The college administration, however, interceded with shopping plaza officials and a portion of the parking area was allotted to students. The restaurant dropped its minimum charge.[19]

A more significant matter of concern to the students was "the recognition of the student body as an adult group with mature bodies and minds," as expressed in an editorial in the college newspaper. The "participatory democracy" movement was catching on among students. "These students," the editorial continued, "are realistic and well-motivated. They are attempting to better the college and not ruin it. As a student body they want to know what is going on at the college not only in student affairs but those of the administration. They desire and deserve the privilege of having a vote in all affairs regarding their school. This is not detrimental to the college."[20]

This concern for student representation on the governing board of the college was not unique to Bloom College at this time. Pressure in this direction was being exerted at four-year colleges. In response to this desire for recognition, the Bloom Community College board provided for student representation. A student was thus allowed to sit with the board at all general sessions and comment but not to vote. Ramon Garcia, the first Bloom College student to win the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, was the initial student representative to take a seat on 14 January 1967, six years before a state law was enacted to this effect.[21] In this respect Bloom College was moving along the cutting edge of community colleges throughout the country.

Within weeks the need for policies pertaining directly to Bloom College began to develop. So in January 1967 the board confronted the problem of formulating new policies for the college. The initial step was a meeting with all parts of the college. At this meeting all board members were given a copy of the policies from the high school and opinions were expressed. Faculty representatives and the student representative also commented. The board chairman asked for volunteers from the administration, the faculty and the student body to work with two members of the board to help rewrite the policies and adopt them to the needs of Bloom Community College.[22]

Response of the faculty to this cooperative effort was supportive and encouraging. "As I remember," one faculty member stated, "the faculty was excited about this concept. And we participated fully." In view of the addition of programs, the issue of the procedure needed for curriculum change was paramount. After weeks of work by various groups on the policy formation, a rather broad statement of policy was adopted. "Curriculum change," it was decided, "may be initiated by the administration, the Faculty Senate, the curriculum committee or individual faculty members ... As in all matters involving faculty and administrative relations, the sponsors or opponents of curricular change may, in extreme cases, seek the support of the Faculty Senate or the faculty as a whole."[23]

A de facto College Becomes de jure Through Annexation

The action which the Junior College Act (1965) compelled existing junior colleges to take in joining the statewide system was more than matched by the action which the law compelled for non-district areas that wished to become a part of the system. Many local areas or regions throughout the state provided laboratories in which representative democracy worked out the problems of creating larger or new junior colleges at the grass roots level. In the case of Bloom Community College the result was the creation of a *de jure* college district in what had always been from the beginning a *de facto* college district.

One of the main purposes of the Junior College Act was to incorporate the entire state of Illinois into junior college districts as a part of higher education. When the act became effective 1 July 1966 there existed many public junior colleges through the state. The law provided an orderly procedure for areas without a college to establish their own or join another college district.

When the post-World War II baby boom began to move up through the secondary schools in the early '60s it brought burgeoning numbers of high school graduates each year with a larger portion seeking college training. For districts like Bloom, which operated a community college, the problem was less severe. But for districts like Rich, Crete-Monee and Homewood-Flossmoor the problem was urgent.

The issue was becoming especially pressing for Rich Township which opened a second campus (Central) in 1961. Between 1963 and 1966 Rich averaged more than 500 graduates from the two high schools each year. Homewood-Flossmoor opened its new high school in 1959 and between 1963 and 1966 was graduating on the average more than 400 each year. Crete-Monee during the same period was graduating on the average more than 150. In addition to these public high school graduates, Marian, a parochial high school, was graduating more than 280 on the average during the same period.[24] Most of these graduates wished for more education and not all were able to find places in or afford the costs of four-year colleges.

The Illinois Junior College Act provided these districts without colleges three choices. First, the district could create its own college district, providing that qualifications could be met. This procedure, however, would take at least two years. Second, the district could levy a tax of three cents per hundred dollars of equalized assessed valuation to be used to pay tuition of its high school graduates to an existing junior college. But with graduating classes numbering in the hundreds each year a three-cent tax would not begin to pay the tuition. Third, the district could annex to an existing district.[25] This method also had drawbacks; one was that it opened the way for inter-community strife.

Alert, community minded citizens in each of the five high school districts without a junior college began to concern themselves with the junior college development in the middle 1960s, especially after enactment of the law in 1965. They soon became aware of the choices. Superintendent James D. Logsdon, of Thornton Township High School, alerted them to a fourth choice which was actually a variation of the third method of annexation. He suggested a single junior college district which would extend from the Chicago city limits to Will county and from the Indiana state line to Tinley Park. The nucleus of such a district would be Bloom Community College and Thornton Junior College. "Such a large district," he said, "would result in a very small tax rate." A plan of this dimension was feasible under the act.[26]

In December 1965 representatives from the seven high school districts (Bloom, Thornton, Thornton-Fractional, Bremen, Crete-Monee, Rich, and Homewood-Flossmoor) met to explore the possibility of forming an area junior college district and in February 1966 formed a steering committee consisting of 21 members to consider the problem. In June 1966 this group became the Seven District Study Committee with Robert F.

Marschner (1908-1984), the original board president of the Homewood-Flossmoor high school district, as chairman.[27]

The Seven District Study Committee held several meetings during the last half of 1966 to consider various plans of junior college organization for the south suburban region. A seven-district junior college was given most consideration. Other plans suggested were a district consisting of the Rich, Crete-Monee and Homewood-Flossmoor districts; and a district consisting of Bloom, Rich, Crete-Monee and Homewood-Flossmoor high school districts. The committee issued a final report on 15 December 1966 without making any recommendation as to the organizational structure of the south suburban junior college region. "Lack of unanimity," the report said, "precluded reaching the consensus that a single district is feasible at this time." The report did stress, however, the cost to the taxpayers should be paramount over "how the area is districted."[28]

Though the study recommended no junior college district, the Seven District Study provided two valuable services for junior college education in the region. First it furnished data particularly in terms of enrollment figures. As the chairman stated: "Perhaps the main contribution of the Seven District Study," he remarked, "was that it provided enrollment projections for high schools within the seven districts. Studies of this kind were done a decade previously especially in the Homewood-Flossmoor community for their high school. As the 1960s arrived it was obvious that a junior college was necessary for all seven districts. So the Seven District Study carried forward some work that had already been done."[29]

A second, and perhaps more important, service which the Seven District Study provided was a forum for the expression of positions regarding the formation of junior college districts in the south suburban region. It is essential to the American representative democratic form of government that issues are discussed by representatives of the population. Then the issue is voted on and the majority holds. This explains why the study issued no recommendation for a junior college organization. In carrying out its function as a forum there was no consensus and hence no recommendation.

At a June 1966 meeting of the Seven District Study group the respective positions of the non-college districts began to crystallize. All these non-college districts favored a large, seven-district organization if it could be achieved by July 1967. The Crete-Monee delegation reported that it was "overwhelmingly in favor of a seven-unit district." In subsequent months, however, the Crete-Monee members modified their position and deferred to the Rich group. The Homewood-Flossmoor delegation also expressed a preference for a seven-district organization because their district "sits in the middle." The delegation spokesman went on to state, "how can we lose if we are in the middle of a junior college district rather than between two or three districts?" Essentially this remained the position of the Homewood-Flossmoor district throughout the annexation process.[30]

From the Rich district in Park Forest came a more strident position. Lester K. Kloss spoke for this delegation. Community minded, Kloss, who was later to become the second Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the college, became interested in the junior college movement in the early '60s. After attending a few meetings of the steering committee he found himself as chairman and spokesman. A graduate of Duke University holding the degree of Master of Business Administration from the University of Chicago, Kloss was a management consultant and had been a Park Forest resident since the early '50s. Arriving in the village when he did, Kloss could not avoid absorbing the inter-community rivalry that existed at that time between the industrial center of the area which was Chicago Heights and the post-World War II planned suburban city of Park Forest.

To Kloss in June 1966, time was important. "It is essential," he stated, "...that action comes quickly. We would like to find a solution which will not fragment the situation." Rich at this time, however, was not prepared to come into any district through annexation. "We want to come in on an equal-footing basis," he stated. "It is not a question of wanting or not wanting an association with the other districts, but rather the nature of such an association. We have no intentions of surrendering our district's boundaries to an existing group."[31]

Kloss seemed to present the case for an annexation arrangement like the admission of states to the Union; that is, on a complete and equitable basis at one stroke. Unfortunately, the Illinois lawmakers of the 20th century had not caught up with the republican masters of the late 18th century. Annexation procedures in the junior college law did not match that of admission of states.

During the next three months, however, the Rich position moderated slightly. In September, in response to a request of the Seven District Study for a position paper, the Rich contingent stated it felt "entitled to early representation on the board" and would consent to annexation. The Rich group still "strongly favored a seven district junior college" but this plan, it appeared, was "not attainable in the near future." The group then proposed three alternate actions, "in order of preference" as follows:

> 1. Annexation to Bloom Junior College, *provided* that two members of that board agree to resign in July 1967 to permit appointment of two members from Rich Township Should Homewood-Flossmoor and/or Crete-Monee elect to follow this same course, a total of 3 or 4 board positions should be made available to the three districts (Rich, Homewood-Flossmoor and Crete-Monee).
>
> 2. Annexation to Thornton Junior College, *provided* that the actions of Homewood-Flossmoor and/or Bremen make it possible.
>
> 3. These alternatives failing, we would explore the possibilities of annexation to our western neighbor--Joliet Junior College. We do not regard annexation as the ideal solution, but rather as an expeditious answer to a problem that has been legislated upon us.[32]

This Rich Position Paper represented a breakthrough in the annexation procedure for at least two reasons. First, from the outset, the Rich district had taken the lead among the non-college districts in considering the impact of the Junior College Act on the south suburban region. The steering committee originated in that district. Second, the position of Rich was pivotal in any junior college configuration in the area because of its location. Unless Rich formed a separate college district of its own, which would require at least two years of time, some form of annexation represented the best way to a junior college. But annexation required contiguity, or connection with an existing college district. Rich connected with Bloom, but unless Homewood-Flossmoor annexed to Thornton, Rich had little choice but to annex to Bloom and Homewood-Flossmoor had taken no firm steps in any direction.

A third reason why the Rich Position Paper was significant is because for the first time it recommended alternate annexation patterns in order of priority. Rich was prepared to seek annexation to Bloom with the condition that two incumbent board members resign to be replaced by Rich representatives and if Homewood-Flossmoor and Crete chose to annex to Bloom then three or four board positions should be made available to these annexing districts. That Rich desired board representation quickly is understandable. Waiting an undue length of time would amount to taxation without representation, hardly a tenable position in the United States.

The second Rich choice was annexation to Thornton but this could not be done unless Homewood-Flossmoor or Bremen districts annexed at the same time. In the Rich proposal for annexation to Thornton, however, there was no mention of conditions for board membership.

The third alternative to seek annexation to the Joliet district was never a serious consideration. "The annexation to Joliet," Kloss said, "was never really a serious thing. If anything it was nothing more than sort of negotiating leverage with Bloom to make Bloom aware that we did have some place else to go. But it was obvious to all of us that between the western boundary of Matteson and Park Forest and the eastern boundaries of Joliet, there was a vast wasteland and the distances were just too great; whereas we had much more of a community affinity to Chicago Heights and the surrounding areas."[33]

In early autumn 1966, feeling for a single, large district junior college remained strong among the five non-college districts. Time, however, was becoming a factor because of the large numbers of high school graduates seeking post-secondary education. The Junior College Act mandated high school districts to pay tuition for high school graduates going on to a junior college if the district maintained none of its own. In view of this, unless a large, single district could become a reality by July 1967, immediate relief in some other way would be necessary if not imperative. But the existing colleges, Bloom and Thornton, were at the point of selecting permanent sites and geographical configuration of the districts would have a bearing on site locations.

In an effort to meet this urgent problem and "as a means of getting off dead center," Kloss came forth with a "compromise plan" of his own. Kloss's compromise consisted of two parts.

Part one called for immediate steps toward annexation with Crete-Monee, Homewood-Flossmoor and Rich annexing to Bloom and Bremen and Thornton-Fractional annexing to Thornton. The second part recommended that the Seven District Study Committee continue its discussions and study activities without time constraints. This would provide an opportunity to evaluate the operation of two colleges. "Should we find," Kloss stated, "that there are serious limitations placed upon our programs by the operation of two colleges then another annexation could bring us together into the seven district plan with which we have struggled for so long. If on the other hand, we found that each college was large enough to accomplish all of its objectives, the seven district plan could be laid to rest."[34]

The timing and substance of the Kloss Plan added momentum to resolution of the south suburban junior college organization. Thereafter steps toward annexation began in earnest. Meanwhile a critical factor in resolving the regional junior college organization depended on the position of Bloom Community College, now District No. 515 in the Illinois Junior College system.

If the three non-college districts needed a junior college and were leaning toward annexation to Bloom, the college needed them. Under terms of the Junior College Act, a public junior college was expected to have a full time equivalency enrollment of at least 2,000 students within five years after organization. Without expansion beyond the limits of Bloom Township, the college would be hard pressed to meet this requirement by 1971. Early in 1966 the college made clear that it "needs and wants other areas to annex to the college district."[35]

This need for expansion was the basis of a "gentlemen's agreement" between Bloom Community College and the Illinois Junior College Board. When Bloom Community College applied for status as a Class I college, Gerald W. Smith, Illinois Junior College Board executive secretary, made sure it was understood that after Bloom became a Class I institution it would seek annexation from surrounding high school districts.[36]

The position of Bloom Community College, however, was detailed in a "White Paper" in response to a request of the Seven District Study committee.[b] Besides the need for a minimum 2,000 full time equivalent students to meet state aid requirements, the paper emphasized the advantage that annexation would bring in terms of a larger tax base and "more varied curricular offerings." Annexation would have another benefit. "This is," the paper stated, "that the annexation of one or two territories to Bloom would prepare the way for others to annex and eventually for two large junior college districts forming into one giant junior college district for the entire south suburban Cook County district." Bloom was vulnerable too, the paper stated because the configuration that annexation took could damage Bloom. For example, if Homewood-Flossmoor annexed to Thornton and Rich and Crete-Monee followed, then Bloom would be isolated with little chance of expansion or even survival.[37]

The White Paper also alluded to perhaps the most significant consequence that annexation might have on Bloom Community College; that is, changing the college from a one-district institution to a larger, more cosmopolitan one. "It is possible," the report stated, "that within four years after a district or two or three districts annexed to Bloom, the board might not have a member from the original district.," Thus the college would not be Bloom College but a larger institution with wider and stronger support. The report emphasized that the "main issue is not what is to the advantage of Bloom Community College as an institution or of any district as such. The main issue is: What is to the advantage of junior college students?"[38] The paper made it clear that Bloom wished to continue studying how junior college education can be made available to all who desired it in the area served by the seven districts; the college was committed to the idea of expanding its present district boundaries.

The sentiment toward annexation of Crete-Monee, Rich and Homewood-Flossmoor to Bloom that was developing through October and early November 1966 was favorable to the Bloom Board. The issue of a large district, however, had not been definitely decided when the Seven District Study Committee met late in November. Following a strongly-worded proposal from a Park Forest resident for bringing the districts together into a single junior college district, Chairman Dale Collins, objected. He said a minority report might be necessary if the final report included a recommendation that the seven high school districts involved in the study eventually unified into a single junior college district. "We are here to decide what should be done by our districts now," he said. "There is no need to define utopia, God and motherhood."[39] The final report made no recommendation for the annexation configuration.

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[b] A White Paper is a document often utilized by a governing body to justify its opposition in some matter of great interest. The position of Bloom Community College was of the utmost importance to the Seven District Study Committee.

Meanwhile the Bloom College trustees continued their commitment to annexation. On 8 November board members and the president attended a meeting of the Crete-Monee district to discuss annexation. A similar meeting was held with the Homewood-Flossmoor board on 15 November; and another was held at Rich with that board on 28 November. All meetings were cordial. Though the Peotone and Beecher districts were not contiguous with Bloom and could not annex under present circumstances, the Bloom trustee chairman and president met with these boards on 5 and 12 of December respectively. Annexation of Crete-Monee to Bloom meant that these districts (Peotone and Beecher) would be contiguous and able to join Bloom College.

Early in January came the first announcement of annexation from the Rich and Crete-Monee districts. At a private meeting on 28 December 1966 these two high school districts "agreed unanimously" to join the Bloom Junior College district. "The expenditure," the board stated, "of approximately $50,000 for tuition fees for students attending Bloom Community College and the likelihood that this figure would about double next year," was an important reason. "Rich Township graduates," the statement continued, "have shown a decided preference for Bloom Community College over the other junior colleges that they might attend. Under some circumstances failure of the high school district to affiliate with a junior college would force the parents to pay for the advanced education of their children."[40]

On 9 January 1967 the Homewood-Flossmoor board announced the district's annexation to the Bloom Junior College District. The reasoning was much the same as for Rich and Crete-Monee. "The Homewood-Flossmoor high school district," the statement read, "is presently sharing in the tuition cost of 118 of its graduates at the Bloom Community College and 41 at Thornton Junior College. The three-cent per $100 of assessed valuation levy which the district can make is not sufficient to pay the Homewood-Flossmoor share of the student's tuition at junior colleges. The expenditure of approximately $18,000 for tuition at junior colleges could rise to as much as $50,000 for the next school year unless the district affiliates with a junior college. The current tax levy for the Bloom Community College is nine cents. The board has the responsibility of guaranteeing to parents and students that a junior college education can be available to them. If the high school is not affiliated with a junior college the students will be 'second choice' to any college that they try to enter," the board pointed out.[41]

Inflation was beginning to affect public education at the secondary level. To protect their fiscal integrity high school districts were compelled to act soon on the junior college issue. A single, large-district junior college might be feasible and desirable; but Bloom Community College was a Class I junior college in the Illinois public junior college system. Annexation to Bloom presented a reasonable and immediate resolution.

History also supported annexation to Bloom Community College. Throughout the 20th century Chicago Heights was the urban-industrial and metropolitan center of the four-township region with Bloom Township High School serving as the apogee of public secondary education in the area until the end of World War II when the movement toward suburbia brought about the formation of several municipal high school districts. The college was founded as an extension of Bloom Township High School; but from the day it opened it had served as a community college for districts of Bloom, Crete-Monee and Rich townships and Homewood-Flossmoor. Enrollment at the beginning of many semesters was equally divided between Bloom, the operating district, and the other three districts. This annexation merely made legal what had always been a fact. A *de facto* college district became a *de jure* college district through annexation.

The decision for annexation represented the end of more than a year of discussion between the four communities. It was a significant step for public education in the southern suburbs. Thus an Annexation Proclamation was drawn up in 18th-century-style script. On 22 January 1967 village presidents of Park Forest, Olympia Fields, Crete, Matteson, Monee, Richton Park, Country Club Hills and the president of Bloom Community College met in the Park Forest Village Hall and signed the document proclaiming annexation and the creation of a community college consisting of four high school districts[42]

A priority condition of the annexing districts was representation on the college Board of Trustees. In response to this condition and to demonstrate its good faith, the Bloom trustees invited each of the annexing districts to send a representative to all trustee meetings as an unofficial, non-voting member of the board. At the trustee meeting of 2 February these three members took their seats. Lester K. Kloss represented Rich Township, Alan B. Hamilton, represented Crete-Monee and James R. McIntyre represented Homewood-Flossmoor.[43] They continued as representatives for 14 months.

The matter of board representation was irritating for the annexing districts and for the Bloom College district. With board membership goes voting rights, and there were those in the Bloom district who, having founded the college, shared the feeling, rightly or wrongly, of a right to control.

This sentiment was expressed clearly at a board meeting. "I couldn't go home at night," one board member stated, "if I gave this college away to Park Forest."[44] Until annexation was completed through a referendum, however, the issue remained. Under terms of the Junior College Act, an annexation becomes effective on 1 July following the annexation election, meaning that between 1 July and April 1968 when the next trustee election was held, the three annexing districts actually did not have voting privileges.[45]

Expressing a desire to annex was one thing. Accomplishing it was another. The process required two steps. First, the Junior College Act mandated that a non-district wishing to annex must file "a petition signed by a fifth of the resident voters of the territory." For Rich, Crete and Monee townships this required at least 6,000 signatures. For Homewood-Flossmoor the number was at least 2,500. The second step was an election in which a majority of the votes cast was required for annexation. Many more signatures than required were obtained and on 8 April 1967 the three annexing-districts voted 7 to 1 in favor of annexing to Bloom Community College effective 1 July 1967. In token of good faith the college waived the non-resident fees for the 1967 summer session of all students from those districts annexing to the college.[46]

Annexation did indeed represent a significant accomplishment in several ways. In terms of public junior college education in the southern suburbs it increased the geographical size of Bloom Community College by more than three times its original size and increased the assessed evaluation of the district by more than two-and-a-half times.[47] This physical and financial enlargement created a stronger college, enabling it to increase services to the students of the entire region for which the college existed from the beginning.

Second, the annexation represented a rewarding experience for those who had spent immeasurable time and effort in wrestling with a hard issue of public education at the local, grass-roots level. And none devoted more time or effort than those districts annexing to the college. Lester K. Kloss, who spearheaded the annexation movement with the Park Forest group, emphasized this point. "I think, in terms of my personal involvement," he stated, "there were two high points for me as an individual. Number one was when the voters of the three annexing districts by a margin of 7 to 1 endorsed the recommendation of our committee that they annex to District 515."[48]

Annexation was also significant in the remarkable efficiency of the representative democratic system of government at the local, grass-roots level, especially when combined with the dedication to the cause of public education. Despite the sharp differences of opinion the issues were threshed out and a decision was made. All who were interested in public junior college education had reason to take pride and satisfaction.

Selecting a Site and an Architect

The college had also been confronting the issue of selecting a site for a permanent campus. These issues of annexation and selecting a site were closely allied; they were resolved within the same constraints and compelled by the same forces. Selecting an architect to build a permanent campus was a common experience occurring at hundreds of community unity colleges throughout Illinois and the United States during the 1960s.

Consideration of a new site for the college was not a sudden one, having been mentioned early in 1966 before the college became a Class I institution and separated from the high school. At that time the board posed a number of questions regarding the future of the college. One was the possibility of "moving the college to another location." Nine months later the issue was raised again when the board discussed the prospect that the college "set out to find land to purchase for a new site. By acquiring land, the board might strengthen its position as a Class I college."[49]

A month later the board took steps to form a committee for selecting a site. By this time the Kloss Compromise had indicated that Rich, Crete-Monee and Homewood-Flossmoor districts were interested in annexing to Bloom. So the Bloom College Board extended an invitation to the boards of these districts to select two people from each district "to serve on an advisory or consulting committee to choose a site for Bloom Community College."

All three districts responded positively and the following Site Selection Committee was formed: F. Carr Price, chairman, and Cornelius Verduin, from Bloom; Thomas Abbott and Lester Kloss, Rich; G. H. Paul and H. C. Gruenkemeyer, Crete-Monee; and Leonard E. Olson and Gordon C. Faerber of Homewood-Flossmoor; with Dale Collins, Bloom trustee chairman, serving as an ex-officio member. The Bloom board also decided to employ William R. Hazard, assistant dean of the School of Education at Northwestern University, to serve as a consultant in choosing the site.[50]

Early in December the Site Selection Committee made several motoring excursions to explore prospective sites. At the first committee meeting the chairman stated that Bloom was "interested in getting the program underway as soon as possible. The most practical thing to do," he said, "in selecting a site, not knowing the exact areas that will be serve by it, is to choose a site that is most centrally located for all areas considered."[51]

In his report issued on 12 February 1967, Professor Hazard stated that seven sites were inspected and considered. The locations were: (1) Halsted Street, bounded by Joe Orr Road, Vollmer Road, Halsted Street and Coolidge Street (2) Glenwood Road consisting of about 100 acres situated directly east across Halsted Street from the Halsted Street tract (3) McCoy Farm, located in an unincorporated area about four miles southeast of the population center, bounded by Sauk Trail on the north, Cottage Grove Avenue on the east, Adair Road on the west, and extending to Steger Road on the south (4) Crete-Monee, consisting of two tracts totaling approximately 200 acres, immediately west of the Crete Village limits with another tract of 113 acres lying north of Exchange Street and immediately west of Crete (5) Along Monee Road, south of Park Forest, in an area of single-family residences (6) Park Forest in a 100-acre area located between the Michigan Central and the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern railroads and between Orchard Drive and Matteson (7) Olympia Fields in an area lying north of U.S. Route 30, south of Olympia Fields Country Club and between Athenia Park on the east and an undeveloped wooded area on the west.[52]

According to Hazard, several criteria were applied to all these sites. Paramount emphasis, according to the report, was placed on locating the site near the center of population. "Most authorities agree," the report stated, "that community colleges serving a commuting student body should be located as close to the center of population as possible. Central location, however, is not the single consideration. Such physical characteristics as the surrounding area, availability of public utilities and services, size and other factors peculiar to the institution or the community must be considered. In this instance, the population center is not the geographic center of the proposed district. The bulk of District 515's population is in the northern portion of the district while the southern and western portions are lightly populated. This plus the possibility that District 515 may develop other campuses as needed suggests that this first site be located as near as possible to the center of the existing population."[53] Other criteria included size, accessibility and the character of the surrounding area.[54]

On the basis of these criteria, Professor Hazard recommended the Halsted Street site as the first choice. "This tract," the report stated, "could total approximately 110 to 120 acres. The location is excellent in relation to the district population and has exceptional accessibility for commuting students. The site is attractive and the surrounding area has no serious drawbacks for a junior college environment. The acquisition of the maximum available portion of the tract lying north of Commercial (Vollmer Road) Street is strongly recommended. This tract, in my opinion, is the most desirable site for the first of a multi-campus district. ...Located within the city limits of Chicago Heights, Ill. the site is approximately three miles northeast of the population center of the proposed district."[55]

Other sites were recommended in the following order: Glenwood Road; the McCoy Farm; the Crete-Monee site; Monee Road south of Park Forest; the Park Forest location west of Orchard Drive, a site which later became the location of the Ludeman Center; and the Olympia Fields site.[56]

Concerned that four of the sites evaluated were not within the existing boundaries of the college district, Professor Hazard sought the advice of the Illinois Junior College Board as to the legality of purchasing these sites. Junior college board officials revealed that in their opinion "the junior college district (Bloom Community College) could not legally purchase land situated outside the district at the time of such purchase."[57] This view limited the Bloom Board to the first three recommendations.

Reaction to the Hazard Report was predictable. Bloom Board members were delighted while Rich Township citizens, considering annexation and hoping that the new site of the college might be somewhere in their district, were disappointed.

Since all but one of the Bloom College Board members were from Chicago Heights and the other from the unincorporated area, the Hazard recommendation had to be satisfactory. The recommendation was especially attractive because the board was aware that an additional tract of land north of Vollmer Road opposite the recommended site was available. Also, there was doubt that Vollmer Road between Halsted and Riegel Road would ever be developed, so the entire area north and south of Vollmer Road consisting of 1.7 square miles could be utilized for a college campus.[58] The Hazard recommendation did not carry the force of law but it presented a strong case for keeping the college in Bloom Township and Chicago Heights and enhanced prospects for a larger campus.

Dissatisfaction with the Hazard recommendation came from those in the Rich district. "After reading the report of the Site Selection Committee," Lester K. Kloss wrote, "I feel compelled to express my dissatisfaction and disappointment. I don't plan to take this issue to the Rich Township voters prior to the April 8 referendum. If they were to become aware of the manner in which we were sold short, I am sure that they would reject annexation ... Before I, too, am attacked for provincialism, let me go on record to say that I would support a site in Bloom Township if it were: (1) Closer to the population center and direction of population growth [and] (2) More visually attractive." Kloss, however was understanding. "I can understand," he wrote, "the commitment that your board must feel to the residents of Bloom Township who elected them. Consequently, I really don't have much hope that additional sites (either within or without Bloom Township) will be considered."[59]

Kloss's argument was not without substance. Assuming that the college district consisted of the four townships (Bloom, Rich, Crete and Monee) which at that time it did not, the Halsted site was away from the population center and the direction that population was moving the middle 1960s. Census figures show that Monee Township grew 41.1 percent between 1960 and 1970 as compared to a growth of 34.3 percent for Bloom Township, 30.1 percent for Crete Township, and 27 percent for Rich Township.[60]

Another board member, James W. Griffith, several years later shared Kloss's impression that the site was hardly aesthetic. "This is an area," Griffith said, "that had a great big creek running through it, it had no streets, it had no alleys, it had no sewers or water mains or anything else. It was just vacant land, and it had never been crossed by man or beast other than the kids roaming around at that particular point in time."[61]

Despite the strenuous objections of the Park Forest spokesman, the village was not unanimous in objecting to the site selection. There were longtime residents of the village who believed that Chicago Heights was a proper location for the college. One of these was Fred J. Meyer. "I thought," Meyer stated, "that [Chicago Heights] was probably the logical place to locate the college. I think that what with politics involved in the thing, Park Forest would have liked to have had it ... but the construction and the development of Prairie

State College in Chicago Heights served a real purpose for the young people in Park Forest."[62]

There were also residents in Chicago Heights who did not feel a firm commitment to the college being located in that city. "As long as it was in the district," stated Charles C. Donovan, "with easy access to all students in the district I don't think the location was too important."[63]

Several tasks remained before the issue was resolved. Soil tests were necessary. The first choice site may have met other criteria but if the land was not appropriate for the construction of a large building it could affect the ultimate decision. Soil tests, however, on the first-choice site showed allowable soil bearing pressures of 6,000 pounds per square foot, whereas the second choice reading was only 3,000 pounds per square foot.[64] This indicated that foundation costs for the first site would be lower.

Encouraged by soil-test reports, Site Selection Committee Chairman F. Carr Price moved to seek advice and counsel for acquiring the site property. Though the committee had not taken a vote and made a formal recommendation for purchase of the site, the acquisition of property would be a pressing issue in due time. To serve as a real estate adviser and consultant, Price sought the services of Percy E. Wagner, a nationally-prominent realtor and educator and a longtime resident and leader of the south suburban region. Wagner served as realtor-adviser for several years during which time the college confronted extreme difficulty in procuring the site property. He never submitted a fee for his services.[65]

The Site Selection Committee met in early April. Anticipating a formal decision on approval of the site at this meeting, a group of concerned citizens in Park Forest submitted a proposal for a site in Park Forest. In a letter to the board, Village President B. G. Cunningham drew attention to the Park Forest site located west of Orchard Drive to Matteson and between the Michigan Central and Elgin, Joliet and Eastern railroad tracks. Land donors and the village made the following proposal: "The Village of Park Forest," the letter stated, "will donate 11.2 acres which, added to the above two parcels, brings the total acreage to 131.5 acres at a total price of $580,700. The Village of Park Forest will also provide sewer and water lines to this site at no cost to the college."[66] The group felt that this site would provide a "set of advantages not present in any other site."[67]

At the Bloom College Board meeting of 6 April 1967, two days before the annexation referendum, the Site Selection Committee reported that "the recommendations of the committee [to select the Halsted Street site] ... were adopted by a majority vote (6 to 1). While it is regretted that the vote was not unanimous, it is to be expected that there will be varying opinions on the desirability of any particular site."[68]

Recommendation of the Site Selection Committee for the Halsted Site as first choice continued to evoke opposition from Park Forest citizens. The Site Selection Committee chairman brought these criticisms to the attention of the board president in a letter. "It has come to my attention," he wrote, "that in selecting a site for the college the Site Selection Committee has been criticized on these counts: First, the procedure of the Site Selection Committee was undemocratic; second, the official board minutes do not record that a site has ever been selected; and third, that a letter from Mr. B. B. Cunningham, village president of Park Forest, addressed to the board was not acknowledged."[69]

The disappointment of the Park Forest citizens was understandable to the Bloom board and at a subsequent meeting the board addressed the criticisms. The board recorded in the minutes its approval of the Halsted site as recommended on 6 April. The board then proceeded to the other two objections. Minutes of the meeting record "that the board approves the recommendation of the site selection committee for the selection of Site No. 1 or Site A as recommended by Dr. Hazard in his report. That the recommendation of the Site Selection Committee covered five points, that the board approved only the first four of these five points, and that there be no conflict in the interpretation of the site recommended which is Site No. 1, or Site A only. That the architect as part of his contract will review the site selected, which is Site A, and review also Sites B and C. If the architect markedly disagrees with the site selected as the first choice, that is Site A, then the issue will be sent back to the site selection committee for further study."[70]

Then the board turned to the third criticism, the lack of response to the Cunningham letter. In this answer the board emphasized that the Hazard Report recommended the Halsted site as "first site...located as near as possible to the center of the existing population." In its answer to Cunningham the board wrote that "though projected enrollment figures are difficult to estimate accurately, it is quite likely that within six to eight years there will need to be another campus for Illinois Junior College District No. 515 to accommodate the burgeoning enrollment. A second site in or near Park Forest would therefore seem to be a reasonable possibility."[71] Professor Hazard urged that "the impression that the Halsted Street location is to be the only site...should be corrected."[72] The prospect of a second campus was designed to soften the disappointment with the location of the first site. Realists, however, expressed reservations about future enrollment growth. These reservations were borne out indeed when subsequent enrollment never warranted serious consideration of a second campus.

Final approval of the site, however, rested with the Illinois Junior College Board. The site required a visitation by representatives of this board who utilized a set of guidelines for evaluation. These were as follows: "Location with respect to the entire district, size of the site in relation to the projected campus, accessibility of site by existing or presently planned streets and highways, cost and availability of site, location in relation to surrounding environment, soil condition, availability of utilities and topography of site." Three price appraisals were also needed by independent firms.[73]

On the basis of these guidelines the Illinois Junior College Board evaluation group "recommended that the Illinois Junior College Board approve this (Halsted Site) selection." There was, however, a reservation on price. "If, in the opinion of the Illinois Junior College Board," the report stated, "the price tag attached to this site appears to be prohibitive, our recommendation would be to ask the Bloom board to explore more fully the costs of acquiring, bringing in utilities and site development [at other sites] so that a more realistic comparison may be made."[74]

In its first few years, the Illinois Junior Columbia Board held meetings at different locations, usually alternating between a site downstate and one in Chicago. The decision on the Bloom Community College site was on the agenda for the meeting of 9 June 1967 at the Sherman House in Chicago.

An executive session was called in the morning to discuss the Bloom College site. Attending this meeting were Gerald W. Smith, the executive secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board; Dale Collins, chairman of the Bloom trustees; Percy E. Wagner, realtor-adviser for the college; and the college president, among a few others. The discussion lasted less than half an hour and related to the cost per acre of the site property. Three appraisals on the property, according to the Illinois Junior College Board report, averaged "approximately $15,000" per acre. "This land," the report continued, "is owned by a considerable number of people but most of it could be purchased by direct negotiation with the owners. Some portions would very probably required condemnation proceedings." A figure of $15,000 per acre was definitely out of the question according to the junior college board representatives. A price of $6,000 maximum was suggested, and the Bloom College realtor-adviser stated that he was confident that the site could be purchased at that price.[75]

The same afternoon in the Crystal Room of the hotel the Illinois Junior College Board met. A small group of observers attended the meeting. Among these were Lynn Brenne, member of the Park Forest Village Board, Doris Hill (1926-1991), a press reporter who had done work in the Park Forest group moving for annexation and who would later become a trustee of Prairie State College, and the college president.

When the Bloom site was called on the agenda Brenne asked to speak. Brenne stated that he "held the Board of District No. 515 in high regard and had considerable respect for its choice of a site." He said that if the board encountered any difficulty in purchasing the site under $6,000 an acre he hoped it would again consider the Park Forest site. He stated that he thought the board should reveal comparative information on the three sites and explain why it chose the $6,000 an acre site rather than another cheaper site.[76]

There were no other remarks from the floor, and the board called the issue to a vote. Unanimously the board gave its "approval to purchase approximately 119 acres of land as a college site, at a cost not to exceed $6,000 per acre."[77] This meant that the new location of Bloom Community College would be between Halsted and Coolidge streets, south of Vollmer Road and north of Joe Orr Road.

Considering the conditions surrounding Bloom Community College during 1966 and 1967 selecting a site in Chicago Heights was predictable. First there was the inter-municipal rivalry between Chicago Heights and Park Forest which had simmered since the suburban village was planted west and south of the urban-industrial center in the early post-World War II years.

Location of the college site thus became a prize strongly desired by both communities. Policy making, however, rested with the college trustees, all but one of whom resided in Chicago Heights. Furthermore, when the site was selected there were no provisions allowing a college to be located outside its district boundaries. Chicago Heights through the Bloom board "held all the cards." Perhaps the Park Forest community would have been satisfied if the site selection had been postponed at least until July 1967 when annexation took effect and better still until April 1968 when two members of the annexed community were elected to the board.

Between 1965 and 1967 an average of one junior college per week was established somewhere in the United States, and during this period there were weeks when this average held true in Illinois. Junior colleges became targets of highly-organized architectural firms eager to capture this market.

Gerald W. Smith, Executive Secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board, describes the scene at the state level. "At least eight large architectural firms in California, Texas, Illinois, Michigan and New York," he stated, "were pushing fast and hard on the national scene. It was a common occurrence for me, at the IJCB office, to receive requests for names of new college trustees either before they were elected or on the day after election. Within a week the new boards were besieged with mail, phone calls and visiting sales people from the architects offering to assist with site selection, campus planning and construction. Boards were urged to accept complimentary trips to see firms' work elsewhere," he relates.[78]

Late in 1966 Bloom Community College also found itself the target of sudden interest from architects. Brochures printed on elegant paper and with elaborate art work began to arrive. By early 1967 dozens of architects had deluged the college with their impressive qualifications. Board Secretary, Edward A. Opila, headed a committee to sort out the applicants and select seven which were interviewed over a period of two months. The firm of Perkins and Will was finally selected to build the permanent campus with the understanding that "the architect review the site selected, plus the second and third choices, as part of its contract."[79]

The Perkins and Will firm began in 1935 and recorded early success in designing a school in Winnetka, Ill., which became a prototype for new schools across the nation. During the 1940s and 1950s the firm was a leading force in the school-building boom. According to reliable sources Perkins and Will had several general guidelines for accepting business. "Its minimum fee is $100,000, it insists on a minimum projected profit of 10 percent and it shies away from all-comers design competitions. But it breaks these rules from time to time."[80] Perkins and Will was among the leaders in the construction of Illinois junior colleges in the 1960s, constructing three other colleges including Illinois central at East Peoria. A Texas firm obtained the most contracts and designed at least eight campuses while another Chicago firm did seven; a California company designed three.[81]

The selection of an architect evoked little clamor, and concern if any, among the newly annexed districts. Apparently the selection of an architect was not that important. Location of the college counted, but who built it didn't make much difference.

Selecting a President for a New College

There remained another problem for the Bloom Community College trustees to resolve in the spring of 1967. That was the selection of a president. By the summer of 1967 the transition from a college under the aegis of Bloom High School to a separate and independent institution was completed. It was clear that the next several years would be a difficult period for the college.

Selecting a chief administrator is one of the most important and perhaps difficult decisions that a policy-making board of an educational institution makes. The decision is important because the chief administrator, or president, of a community college must provide leadership, broad and difficult as that term is to define. He or she must set the tone for the entire college. He or she is responsible for carrying out the policies which the trustees define. He or she must see to it that the institution is operated efficiently. He or she must have rapport with the faculty and provide direction in curriculum development. The main task for a board is to select a first-rate president, then sit back and let him or her run the institution. Finding a person who can handle all of these tasks and provide leadership, however, is not easy at any time and at other times becomes more difficult. The Bloom Community College trustees confronted this difficult task twice in less than a year. Each time the conditions were different and the qualifications needed for the president were different.

In mid-June 1967, Bloom Community College was on the threshold of sharp changes. At this point the college looked forward to the development of nearly two square miles of property for a new campus to accommodate growing enrollment. At the same time the junior college movement throughout the country was developing at a frenzied pace and in no state was the pace more hectic than in Illinois. In the midst of this massive physical growth in the junior college movement there was the need to discover new methods of instruction and to develop curriculum to meet the quickening pace of the late 1960s. Besides the constant requirements for a chief administrator to organize the administration, lead the faculty and involve the community in the college, the president of Bloom Community College in September 1967 would need to confront these impending problems. The board had no criticism of the interim president. His performance had been quite satisfactory. The board believed, however, that future development would be better served with a new president, one who had no connection with Bloom and who could begin fresh with new ideas and new approaches.

To assist in the selection of a president, the Bloom trustees obtained the services of Professor Eldon Lichty (1900-1987) of the College of Education at Illinois State University at Normal. Professor Lichty was a leader in the Illinois junior college movement in the decades after World War II. He had been a consultant in writing the Illinois Junior College Law (1965). In January 1967 the board began to accept applications for the position of president effective 1 July 1967.

Serious consideration of applications was delayed, however, until after the elections of 8 April. Two elections held on that day were important to Bloom Community College. First was the annexation referendum and second was the trustee election for two positions on the Bloom College Board. The overwhelming majority in favor of annexation confirmed that the college would be a large-district institution as of 1 July. Incumbents Dale Collins and Rev. H. D. Cockerham, were reelected, thus confirming the original board membership of the college. Following the elections the board announced that a decision on a new college president would be made within six weeks.[82]

From a list of many applications the board selected three for personal interviews and on 25 May announced the appointment of Richard W. Hostrop effective 1 July 1967.[83] The 42-year-old Hostrop "seemed to have good qualifications and good recommendations."[84]

Born in Waterloo, Iowa, Hostrop as a child moved with his parents to California where he resided most of his life. He held a degree of Doctor of Education from the University of California, Los Angeles branch (UCLA), and had considerable teaching and administrative experience. He had taught at the junior college level and had more than 10 years of administrative experience mostly at the secondary level. This included service in American schools in Italy and Japan. When appointed to head Bloom Community College Hostrop was serving as registrar at the College of the Desert in Palm Desert, Calif. In addition to his experience as an educator, Hostrop was also a registered psychologist.

UCLA where Hostrop was trained was one of only a few graduate schools which offered training in junior college administration. California had been among the first states to develop a statewide system and provide junior college leadership. The qualifications of the new president seemed quite satisfactory for leading Bloom Community College and meeting the problems of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In the summer of 1967 Bloom Community College had reason to look forward with excitement and high hopes. The college had obtained a settlement of assets with and separated completely from the high school, annexed three districts to enlarge its size by three times and selected a site for the location of a new college. With a new president tuned to the times the future seemed bright.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LOOKING TOWARD A NEW ERA

When classes began in September 1967 Bloom Community College was hardly the same place it had been a decade earlier when first opening its doors. It was not even the same as it had been a year earlier. The community which supported the college was in transition, the components of the institution were growing larger and a new or different image was developing.

A Community in Transition

One of the more subtle and less noticeable changes was that the community which supported Illinois Junior College District 515 during the first decade as an independent institution (1967-1977) was not the same as the community was when the college was established nor did the community remain the same throughout this second decade. This community was changing in terms of population numbers, movement and composition. The economy was also changing.

Population of the college community shifted from a tremendous growth or boom in the late 1950s and early 1960s to a more modest gain during the decade of the late 1960s and early 1970s. A casual observer such as a motorist enroute to and from employment at the same time each day detected subtle clues to this effect. Early in the 1960s few autos would be stopped at traffic signals, but within months there were more autos waiting. This indicated that population was growing. In the '70s, however, the college district population began to stabilize as the following chart indicates:

COLLEGE DISTRICT POPULATION INCREASES BY TOWNSHIP -- 1950-1970

	Bloom	% Inc.	Rich	% Inc.	Crete	% Inc.	Monee	% Inc.	District	% Inc.
1950	41,273		9,436		6,380		1,737		58,826	
1960	70,530	70.8	35,258	273.6	11,737	83.9	5,131	195.3	122,656	108.5
1970	94,757	34.3	44,801	27.0	15,270	30.1	7,240	41.1	162,068	32.1

After a dramatic growth of 108.5 percent between 1950 and 1960 the college district fell back to a growth of 32.1 percent in the '60s. The community was indeed still growing in population albeit at a much reduced rate.

Throughout this dramatic growth period, the direction in which the population was moving in terms of settlement modified from the pattern which had prevailed for more than a century within the college community. This pattern followed the north central section of the district along the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad toward the southwest and from the north central section toward the southeast along Dixie Highway. During the 1960s and early 1970s population continued to develop along the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad, but growth shifted into the northeastern section of the district and declined in the central section of the district. The following chart which shows the population figures for municipalities in 1960 and 1970 and the percent of gain during that decade demonstrates this movement:

COLLEGE DISTRICT POPULATION INCREASES BY MUNICIPALITY -- 1960-1970

	1960	1970	% Increase
Chicago Heights	34,331	40,844	18.9
Crete	3,788	4,656	22.9
Country Club Hills	3,421	6,920	102.2
East Chicago Heights	3,270	5,000	52.9
Flossmoor	4,624	7,846	69.6
Glenwood	882	7,416	740.1
Homewood	13,371	18,871	41.1
Matteson	3,225	4,741	47.0
Monee	646	940	45.5
Olympia Fields	1,503	3,478	131.4
Park Forest	29,993	30,716	2.4
Park Forest South	---	1,748	100.0
Richton Park	993	2,558	174.1
Sauk Village	4,687	7,479	59.5
South Chicago Heights	4,043	4,932	21.9
Steger	6,432	8,104	25.9

The dramatic growth in Glenwood which expanded more than seven times between 1960 and 1970 demonstrates the movement of population into the northeastern section of the district. South of this point, but still in the eastern section of the community, Sauk Village grew by 59.5 percent during the same period. Development of the Calumet Expressway contributed to this expansion making these communities readily accessible by auto to places of employment in Chicago and the northwestern Indiana industrial region.

But the population expansion from the north central edge of the district southwest along the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad was almost as large. Richton Park grew by 174.1 percent, Olympia Fields by 131.4 percent, Country Club Hills by 102.2 percent, and Flossmoor by 69.6 percent. Doubtless the lure of convenient commuter transportation attracted population to this section, but the opening of Interstate Highway 57 provided a direct automobile link with Chicago making the area more accessible for motorist transportation.

Meanwhile, population in the center of the college community remained more stable in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Park Forest gained only 2.4 percent while Chicago Heights gained 18.9 percent and Crete grew by 22.9 percent.

Despite growth of population during the 1960s and early 1970s the socioeconomic strata of the community did not change that much. The pattern of this expansion in the 16 communities reinforced the community as a microcosm of the nation in general. Growth of East Chicago Heights reinforced the lower end of the same ladder. Chicago Heights, Steger, South Chicago Heights and Sauk Village continued to contain a significant blue-collar population. Homewood remained a stable, middle-class community, and Park Forest and Matteson remained largely communities of commuters.

Adding further substance to the microcosm aspect of the college community was the changing profile of minorities especially in terms of Mexican-Americans whose population increased markedly during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Accurate figures are difficult to ascertain but evidence suggests that the Mexican-Americans were the most rapidly-growing minority in the college community from the early 1960s through the middle 1970s.[a] Census figures list 5,613 Hispanics in the college community in 1970, breaking down according to townships as follows: Bloom, 4,510; Rich, 630; Crete, 350; and Monee, 123. Since the college district contains very few Puerto Ricans, Cubans or those of Central American extraction, it is reasonable to assume that Mexican-Americans comprised the large majority of this total. Most of these people were located in Chicago Heights on The Hill and in the southeastern section of the city which provided the largest Spanish-speaking population in the South Suburban Cook County area.[1]

The influx of Mexican-Americans accelerated especially toward the end of the '60s. As a Mexican-American resident stated, "In the old days," he said, "there were only a few Mexicans here and we knew each other. Today, there are so many that we hardly know the family next door."[2] This influx of Chicanos was noticeable in the schools. In Bloom Township's two high schools in 1968 there were 210 Mexican-Americans and by 1972 there were 306.[3]

This influx of Mexican-Americans in the 1960s resulted from a change in the role of these people. In the years just prior to World War II and thereafter, their appearance in the region was seasonal in the spring and summer. They would come to work in the truck-garden fields and return to their homes in the Southwest in the fall. Few would remain throughout the winter. In the early 1960s, however, more began to remain in the area where they found employment in industry. Thus they became "settled out." That is, they remained and became residents of the region.

For several decades Afro-Americans provided the college community with its largest minority. This group still was the largest minority, but during the 1960s and early 1970s, when the percentage of Mexican-Americans increased rapidly, the Afro-Americans increased only slightly. In Bloom Township the black population actually declined percentage-wise from 13.4 percent in 1960 to 13 percent in 1970 while the overall population of the township was growing. In Rich Township the black population increased from 0.05 percent to 1 percent; in Crete Township from 0.01 percent to 1 percent; and in Monee Township from 0.46 percent to 1.3 percent during the same period. By the middle 1970s the black population comprised about 8 percent of the total population of the district, approximately the same as the previous decade.[4]

Though the black population was not gaining noticeably in the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was more mobility in this minority. In 1970 18.1 percent of the black population counted had resided in the college district in 1960, while 53.8 percent of those blacks counted had moved into the district during the decade.[5]

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[a] This difficulty is partly due to the change in counting classification which the U.S. Bureau of the Census utilized in 1960 and 1970. In 1960 Mexican-Americans were counted Americans of Mexican origin but in the 1970 census they were classified as Hispanics which also includes Puerto Ricans, Cubans and others of Central American origin.

The black population which resided in the college community remained segregated largely in the eastern section of Chicago Heights and in East Chicago Heights. But in the late 1960s and 1970s this segregation began to break down. Park Forest increased its black population from 0.09 percent in 1960 to 2.5 percent in 1970 and the process continued steadily in the 1970s. Integration continued to develop moderately in the early 1970s in other municipalities of the district such as Hazel Crest, Country Club Hills, Glenwood, Park Forest South and Matteson.[6]

The other two minorities, Asians, or Orientals, and American Indians comprised a very small part of the district population during the 1960s and 1970s. For these two minorities together the census figures for Bloom Township in 1960 and 1970 were 0.001 percent and 0.6 percent; for Rich Township, 0.4 percent and 0.8 percent; for Crete Township 0.01 and 0.2 percent; and for Monee Township 0.31 percent and 0.8 percent.[7]

While the community was changing in terms of population numbers, movement and composition, there were changes underway in the economy, from one based on industrial production to one which was becoming retail and service oriented. This change was dramatic for Chicago Heights, the industrial center of the community. Industrial factories constructed on the eastern edge of the city early in the century were state of the art for their time. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, these industrial plants began to contract and direct their operations toward their newer plants in other locations outside the district.[8]

Consequences of this shift were dire. Employees of these plants were for the most part blue-collar workers and others at the lower end of the economic scale. Unemployment among these groups grew rapidly.[9]

Also, for Chicago Heights this shift was especially serious in the downtown business center leading to a "process of becoming socio-economically obsolescent."[10] Many of these business establishments deteriorated and others were razed. Still others fled the city entirely. The downtown area of the urban-industrial center of the community took on the appearance of central areas of cities like Chicago, Detroit, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

There was not, however, a complete exodus of industry from the district. New industries were attracted to the western edges of the community. One of these was the Allis-Chalmers Industrial Truck division which opened in Matteson in September 1970. A modern lift truck manufacturing facility, this plant employed about 1,000 with an annual payroll of $30 million.[11]

The college community was also gaining economic strength in terms of retail development. One phenomenon of the post-World War II spread of suburbia was the creation of shopping plazas. Park Forest established the first one in the Chicago area and one of the first in the nation. For more than a decade this made Park Forest one of the leading retail-merchandising centers of the south suburban area adding much to the aura of the "Model Suburban Village," of the post-World War II era. Several smaller plazas opened in the area during the next two decades.

In 1973 the college community found itself with one of the largest shopping centers in the metropolitan Chicago area with the opening of the Lincoln Mall at the southeastern corner of Highway 30 and Cicero Avenue (Illinois Highway 50). The recent opening of Illinois Interstate 57 with a clover-leaf connection a quarter-mile to the west made the mall easily accessible to the entire metropolitan region. This giant center, with its 1.1 million square feet of retail space, including four major department stores as anchors, 130 satellite stores and parking for 5,400 autos spread over 111 acres, provided overwhelming competition for the original plaza in Park Forest and led to its demise.

But the overall effect was a tremendous boost for the college community in terms of assessed evaluation and tax revenue.[12]

This switch from an industrially-oriented economy toward a service-oriented economy also had a bearing on the profile of the working force in the community. In 1970 42.3 percent of population in the college district in the labor force represented skilled and professional occupations. Of this 42.3 percent, 17.8 percent were professional, technical and kindred workers; 17.4 percent were clerical and kindred workers; and 14.9 percent were craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers.[13]

The shifting direction of the economy also broke down inter-community rivalries, bringing them closer together. With both Park Forest and Chicago Heights in the throes of urban renewal, differences decreased, empathy increased and relationships improved.[14]

The changing profile and the switch in the economic and commercial direction had significant implications for the college. The increase in the numbers of Mexican-Americans and mobility of blacks made it incumbent upon the college to provide education and services to get them into the mainstream of the community, while the changing economy made it equally incumbent upon the college to provide retraining and programs for those leaving industrially-oriented work and seeking employment in service-oriented work.

An Overview of Component Parts

A community college is comprised of four component parts, each and all of which are people. Three of these parts are: the trustees, who are the representatives and guardians of the community, and who form the policy of the college; the administration which organizes and manages the college; and the faculty which teaches and trains the fourth part, which is the students, the single most important part of the institution. The composition and profile of the first three parts has a bearing on how the college is prepared to serve the student body.

Sixteen people including two women and three black males served as trustees between 1967 and 1970. Four were businessmen; three were corporation managers; three were engineers; two were medical doctors; two were housewives, one of whom was also an editor; and there was a minister and a farmer. The trustee profile was heavily weighted toward business and professions, which was under-representative of some minorities. This bias, however, was hardly unusual for policy-making boards in the country during the late 1960s.[15]

In terms of length of service the trustees were rather unstable during these three years. The board consisted of seven people at one time, yet 16 different people served during this three-year period with an average length of service of 18 months or one-half of a full term in office.[16] Extreme pressures of the Civil Rights movement and other ponderous problems in the late 1960s explain much of this instability.

Trustees were elected to office for terms of three years. Because Illinois community colleges were under the School Code at this time, one of the seven members was required to reside in and represent the unincorporated area of the district. During these three years elections for trustee positions were relatively quiet meaning that they escaped involvement with local partisan politics. There was, however, a consistent pattern for victorious candidates. Victory was assured if a candidate won heavily in his or her residential district and ran reasonably well in the other sections.[b]

Boards generally follow one of three methods of operation. One is a committee-of-the-whole in which the staff reports to the president and he in turn to the board which deals with issues as a committee-of-the-whole. Another procedure is to function with standing committees using staff personnel. A third method represents a combination of the two with ad-hoc committees utilized for special assignments. For the most part between 1967-70 the board operated as a committee-of-the-whole.[17]

While the trustees had control over carrying out meetings, state legislation had a bearing on this procedure. In 1957 House Bill No. 699 required that the public commission, boards and councils and other public agencies conduct their official deliberations openly.[18] In the surge of the Civil Rights movement and the attendant "participatory democracy" swirl, the law was amended twice, once in 1967 and again in 1969. Though there were never any serious charges that the board was not in compliance with the law, there were outcries from vociferous observers, especially relating to executive sessions. For a while in the late 1960s board meetings were taped, but it was decided to destroy all tapes and to discontinue this practice.[19]

Complicating responsibility of the board to conduct meetings in an open fashion consistent with legislative restraints and representative, democratic principles was the problem of internal relations among members of the board. This became a particular problem during the term of one board member in the late 1960s when relations between him and the other members of the board became acrimonious.

Having served as a community leader in the movement to establish the Afro-American or black studies program at the college, William A. Jackson was elected to the trustees in a bitterly contested election with an incumbent in April 1969.[20] In his enthusiasm to support the black studies program as a board member he sought unusual amounts of information directly from staff members thus embarrassing the president and other board members in carrying out their policy-making responsibilities.

As a counteraction to these activities, the board sought to enact policy that would restrict board members from seeking information directly from staff and "could not or would not be allowed to go out and speak publicly on issues that were currently before the board or before the college." However, the recommendation, which became known as the "squelch policy," was deferred.[21] In further counteraction, Jackson served a "Notice for Claim of Injury" against the board contending that the board "individually and collectively ... conspired to and have in fact libeled and slandered him."[22] Jackson, however, did not seek reelection.

These problems were small compared to many others confronted by the board of Illinois Junior College District No. 515 between 1967 and 1970. One issue included the constant problems connected with operating any institution. It was largely that of dealing with people, perhaps the most difficult task ever. In this case the problem was dealing with the administration, faculty and staff and dealing with the community while striving to advance and improve the image of the college.

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[b] The Prairie State College Archives holds an analysis of each trustee election showing the breakdown of votes for each candidate in each of the four high school districts which comprise the college district. These analyses demonstrate this pattern.

Then there was the constant problem of financial integrity, meaning simply, keeping the college solvent. But as if these were not enough, there were other special problems including obtaining property and providing a new campus and the problem that shook the nation at large in the late 1960s, namely the Civil Rights struggle, sometimes referred to as the Second American Revolution. Being a trustee of Prairie State College in the late 1960s was not an easy task.

From 1967-1970 the profile of administration, like trustees, demonstrated a bias against minorities and women. In these years 18 persons served in the administration. There were 14 men and four women. One male was an Afro-American.[23]

In terms of organization, besides the president there was a vice president of instructional services, five deans, two associate deans, four assistant deans, four directors and a business manager. Of these positions, the new president recommended nine, including the vice president, two of the five deans, both of the associate deans, and all of the assistant deans. Three of the eight whom he did not appoint, however, were formerly associated with Bloom High School. Soon after taking office the new president appointed a fourth Bloom teacher to administration.[24]

In terms of training, only the president held a doctorate at the outset of his administration but within two years, two of the top-level administrators held doctorates. The remainder of the administration held master's degrees.[25]

Carrying out the college's most important function was a full-time faculty of 64 teachers in 1967. In terms of profile this group consisted of 41 males including one Afro-American and 23 females, again revealing a bias against women and definitely against minorities. During the next four years, however, this discrepancy lessened somewhat when 33 full-time faculty were added including nine blacks, four of which were females.[26]

The full-time faculty included one Doctor of Philosophy, two Doctors of Dental Science, one Bachelor of Law, and 57 Master's of Arts or Sciences. Within the next four years three Doctors of Philosophy were appointed to the faculty full-time. Most of the other appointments held master's degrees. Though well-trained and competent, most of the faculty's experience was at the secondary level. About a third of the faculty had several years' experience at the junior college level. For the most part these were teachers who had taught at Bloom Community College of which there were 20, or 31.3 percent of the entire faculty. The remainder had very little experience in college teaching.[27]

There was also a part-time faculty meaning those who held an assignment of less than 15 class-hours of teaching per week. Most of the part-time faculty in 1967 had an assignment of less than six class-hours per week.

A staff of approximately 15 people supported the college in 1967. These included an executive secretary, a head custodian and a helper, and various secretaries and assistants, the latter of whom were mostly employed in the learning center or library.

In terms of students changes took place in these three years. Enrollments increased and though precise figures are not available, in terms of head count, the total enrollment grew approximately 78.6 percent between 1967 and 1970, from 2,008 to 3,731. This growth was not uniform, but it was not disorganized. "I feel [the college] grew in an organized fashion," said a vice president, "though we were unable to measure our enrollment estimates accurately at times."[28]

The student profile also changed sharply. Besides growing older there was a significant increase in women, especially women with young children. By 1972 the number of women exceeded men, a sharp contrast to the first year the college opened when two-thirds of the students were males.[29]

The minority profile change, however, was spotty. In terms of Afro-American students the enrollment gain was rather sharp. In 1967 there were 25 black students enrolled or 2.7 percent of the total enrollment. By 1971 black students increased to 10 percent of the total enrollment or nearly four times.[30] Enrollment of Mexican-Americans and other minorities did not increase nearly this much.

The college remained distinctly a community college in terms of student residences as 89 percent of the students resided within 10 miles of the campus and most of them commuted to the college by automobile.[31]

Toward a New Image

When classes began in September 1967 the college also had to deal with a changing image, brought about by annexation which created a four-township district rather than a single township district. There was also the commitment to broaden and enlarge programs and services already being offered. With various degrees of success the college wrestled with these matters for several years.

A new name for the college was another issue. During the first decade of the college Bloom Township provided direct support albeit students attended from Rich, Crete and Monee townships. That the institution was Bloom Community College was not questioned; but after annexation the college was supported equally by the other three townships, and a new name was expected.

Each of the annexing districts selected a representative to the trustees to sit as non-voting members of the board. At one of the first meetings Lester K. Kloss, representing the Rich Township district, suggested that the trustees begin considering a new name for the college. The trustees decided to wait until President Hostrop assumed his position. At his first meeting with the trustees, President Hostrop recommended a procedure for selecting a new name.[32]

A committee was appointed to select a new name for the college. This group was composed of faculty, administration and three citizens from the community. When several committee meetings failed to produce a distinctive name the decision was made to invite suggestions from the community at large thus producing a wider assortment of names. The name Prairie State College was recommended by Paul Gregg (1924-1968), a faculty-member. The trustees approved it on 5 October 1967, shortly before Gregg's untimely death.[33]

The name seemed appropriate. Long known as the Prairie State, Illinois had no college by such a name. Furthermore, in its socioeconomic, ethnic and minority composition, this college represented a microcosm of Illinois. The name was also one with which the annexing districts could identify. However, the official designation as Illinois Junior College District Number 515 remained unchanged.

The colors and mascot of the college were changed several months later. Originally the colors were red and white and the name was Vikings. In March 1968 the trustees adopted the Gopher as the official mascot and brown and yellow as the official colors.[34]

Steps were also being taken to change the college's image. First there was an attempt to reinvigorate the faculty and enlarge its horizons. At the beginning of the fall semester in 1967 the faculty was almost entirely secondary-school oriented. Furthermore, a large part of the teaching staff came from Bloom High School. Moreover, almost the entire faculty was of Midwestern origin. Although this provided for continuity, there were disadvantages in what could develop into provincialism.[35]

To correct this tendency toward built-in provincialism, authorization was given for full-interview expenses for faculty-candidates who lived more than 100 miles from the college. The administration also made efforts to travel outside the state to interview strong potential candidates.[36]

In a further attempt to broaden faculty horizons many faculty members were provided travel funds to attend local, regional and national institutes and conferences. Mainly these conferences were in California and Florida on campuses of leading junior colleges. A summer seminar in Colorado in 1968 attracted many faculty members.[37] For Glenn Schmitz, one of the faculty members who attended a few of these conferences, this was one of the high points of his experience at Prairie State College. "I think the travel program," said Schmitz," which did cost lots of money ... was one of the most fruitful experiences that the people in the college had."[38]

Along with efforts to broaden faculty perspectives, the administration encouraged and supported efforts at innovative instruction. Under the president's initiative the college became a charter member of Group Ten for the Seventies (GT/70), a consortium of 10 junior colleges across the nation which provided funds for experimental approaches to instruction. Nationally-prominent innovators of instruction were invited to the campus.

Samuel N. Postlethwait of Purdue University was one of these. He explained his audio-tutorial approach to instruction. Programmed instruction courses were offered, and release time was available for faculty who participated in experimental instruction.[39]

Efforts at innovative instruction, however, met with limited success at this time. One program in typing, shorthand and secretarial science utilized tapes in a programmed-learning approach and proved quite successful until the instructor left the college. The Flint Introductory Physics Sequence approach was utilized by one physics teacher with encouraging results. This was one of 10 such programs in the country. Transfer problems and articulation with four-year colleges, however, reduced the effectiveness of this course.[40]

Audio-tutorial instruction was utilized in an English course and a history course, proving successful, and the instructors were invited to explain their programs at regional and national conferences. Success, however, was limited. The English course was discontinued after the death of the instructor. The history course began with the objectives of improving instruction and student retention. Results were mixed. Instruction in terms of grade achievement improved, but retention was insignificant and the program was abandoned after several years.[41]

Computer-assisted-instruction was utilized in a political science course for three semesters in 1969-1970. Results were presented at the College Conference on Computer Assisted Instruction at the University of Iowa in June 1970. This paper was the only one on the program by a junior college.[42] Lack of funds, however, prevented continuation of computer-assisted-instruction.

Innovative instruction at Prairie State College toward the end of the 1960s seems to have paralleled that of many places. Innovation was initiated and urged largely by the administration, but the few efforts at innovation were greeted with apathy by the majority of the faculty. When the initiators tired, the innovations died. There was a feeling of insecurity and reluctance to attempt new methods.[43]

In another effort to enhance the image of the college and foment internal development, the Prairie State College Women's Club was formed. Mrs. Robert R. (Lottie) Rehberg (1914-1983) presented the highlights and purposes of the organization, and the trustees recognized the club on 19 January 1963. The Women's club flourished for 15 years before disbanding.[44]

While efforts were going forward to enhance the image of the college as a separate institution, ongoing problems and issues continued to require close attention. Chief among these was accreditation. The original North Central accreditation granted in 1964 was due for reevaluation early in 1968. Since the college was in the process of transition to an independent institution accreditation from Bloom Community College was transferred to Prairie State College with the provision that the college undergo a review visit within four years and submit annual progress reports.[45] The Illinois Junior College Board also extended recognition of the college for five years.[46]

Curriculum continued to expand, especially in the vocational/technical area. In 1967-1968 the industrial training program was enlarged to improve technical skills of employees in local industry. The college provided theoretical training while local industry furnished mock-ups and laboratory experience in factories with certificates awarded upon completion of courses. Physical science offerings were enhanced with physical and historical geology courses added.[47]

Perhaps the most noteworthy new program adopted during the 1968-1969 academic year was the Child Development program which developed in conjunction with the Headstart program in East Chicago Heights.[c] Prairie State College brought more than 40 of these children to the college and opened a laboratory school which provided training for preschool instructors. This became the nation's first such laboratory school in association with a community college.[48]

Other programs adopted were mental health technology, police science technology, aviation career training, secretarial science, commercial art, computer technology, millwright-machinist technology, industrial electricity, drafting technology, architectural drafting technology, media technology with library and audiovisual options, and structural steel technology.[49]

Another significant development of the 1968-1969 academic year was enlargement of the Continuing Education and Community Services area. This consisted of the formation of a cooperative Continuing Education program within the college district to include three primary centers: Prairie State College; Bloom High School, with branches at the Medgar

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[c] Headstart programs were provided under Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452). Aim of the Headstart program was to provide high-quality preschool education for children of low income families to allow these children to match the preschool education of upper-income children. Research results of these Headstart programs has proved impressive. See: "Changed Lives," a report from the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation on a project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. (*New York Times*, 13 September 1984; and 17 December 1984.)

Evers School in East Chicago Heights and the Community Effort Organization Center in Chicago Heights; and Crete-Monee High School. Also serving as extension centers for extended-day classes were Rich East High School and Peotone High School.[50]

Changing the name of the college was simple but changing the image proved more difficult. The origin of the college was too fresh in the minds of many. Nearly 20 years later there were those who held that the college was still "too much Chicago Heights," but over time this feeling abated as new students attended each year.

CHAPTER NINE

HARD PROBLEMS THWART HIGH HOPES

As the college looked forward with great expectations to a new era in the late 1960s critical external and internal issues tempered the enthusiasm and challenged the resolution. Externally the problems were securing property to locate and construct a main campus. Meanwhile, there was the immediate problem of locating an interim campus to accommodate the growing college until a permanent one could be completed. At the same time there was the constant issue of economics or making ends meet in maintaining the college.

An Interim Campus Emerges

Though construction of a main campus was of paramount importance when classes started in the fall of 1967, a more immediate concern at this time was finding an interim or temporary campus while the main structure was being completed, hopefully within three years. Resolving this problem proved complex.

In September 1967 the college operated facilities in at least six different locations. First there was the College Center on Tenth Street with three mobile or relocatable buildings for faculty offices and the administrative offices on Chicago Road. Then there was Bloom High School which provided physical education facilities and the First Christian Church which supplied classroom space. Other classes were held at the Temple Anshe Sholom in Olympia Fields with dental and nursing programs at St. James Hospital and theater facilities in a rented garage.[1] An additional question was deciding which facilities to keep.

Helpful to resolving the interim campus issue was the availability of approximately 50 acres of property west of Halsted Street and north of Vollmer Road.

There were, however, stipulations on using this real estate. The ground was outside the city limits of Chicago Heights as Vollmer Road at this time was the boundary. Approximately 15 acres of property bordering on the west side of Halsted was being utilized commercially but was not incorporated. Contiguous to this strip to the west was approximately 40 acres of land. The owners of this site, the Checker Oil Company and the Citizens National Bank in Downers Grove, however, would not allow the college to purchase this acreage until the commercial property was annexed into Chicago Heights. Meanwhile, the college was at liberty to lease the site until annexation was completed.[2]

Original campus plans for the college called for completion of the interim and main campuses in three phases. Phase One was to be the development of interim space and the beginning of construction for the main campus. Phase Two was for development of more interim space and continued construction on the permanent campus. And Phase Three was to be completion of the permanent space by the fall of 1970.[3] Due to unforeseen problems the interim campus was developed in three phases the last two of which combined with the fourth phase, that of completing the main campus.[4]

After considering the problem of interim campus facilities throughout the fall of 1967, the trustees decided to construct an interim campus on the property north of Vollmer Road and west of Halsted Street. Meanwhile, the college would retain the College Center, and three relocatable huts on Tenth Street along with the administrative offices on Chicago

Road, classroom space in the First Christian Church, and physical education facilities in Bloom High School.[5] This pleased Bloom High School which could not pass a tax referendum. The rental payments were welcome income.

Several Illinois junior colleges had problems building interim campuses. By definition an interim campus restricts the type of structure to be used. Though permanency is not required, the buildings must provide some endurance.

Raymond Becker, of the Becker Brothers Construction Company in Peoria, designed a structure at Illinois Central College in East Peoria which met the needs of a temporary campus quite satisfactorily. These buildings, called "Becker Buildings," provided a functional structure consisting of concrete floors, insulated walls with plywood exterior sheeting and interior paneling. Ceilings were of sheet-rock secured to roof joists with sheet-rock spray-painted for sand textured effect. The interior consisted of plywood paneling and mahogany doors. The buildings were heated with a gas-fired, hot, forced-air furnace, one on each side of each building with heat flow by a distribution duct system.[6] World War II veterans soon labeled them "barracks" because of their resemblance to army-base structures.

Becker and several other contractors presented their designs to the Prairie State College trustees, but only one "Becker building" was constructed.[7] Though their design was essentially the same as Becker's, the Imperial Equipment Corporation of Lafayette, Ind., secured the contract to construct most of the buildings for the interim campus.[8] At least 10 other Illinois junior colleges including Highland, Lincoln Trail, Illinois Valley, Joliet, Kankakee, Kishwaukee, Southeastern, Thornton, Waubonsee and Black Hawk solved their interim campus building problems with similar structures.[9]

The next step was to break ground. The first of several ground-breaking ceremonies over the next decade and a half before the Prairie State College campus would be completed, took place on 18 July 1968 when a few trustees, administrators and faculty gathered on the land north of Vollmer Road and west of Halsted. It was a hot evening as the sun was setting. A trustee petted and fed a horse grazing nearby. At least two trustees along with the president took turns breaking ground, and the interim campus was underway.

Within three months, six buildings (A,B,C,D,E and F) sprang up and on 7 October 1968 a ribbon-cutting ceremony took place as classes began on the interim campus. A few blackboards were missing and the washroom facilities left something to be desired but these were corrected within a few days. The president announced that Prairie State College was now operating on two campuses, a South Campus which could be thought of as all those programs south of Joe Orr Road on Tenth Street and elsewhere; and a North Campus which could be thought of as all those programs housed north of Joe Orr Road on the interim campus.[10]

A temporary campus was no long-term or real solution. The critical problem of a permanent campus remained. One problem was physical accessibility by automobile for a commuting student-body. An improvised dirt road provided the main access to the interim campus and there was no traffic signal to facilitate this access. Consequently, traffic backups of several blocks developed at times between classes. To avoid this, many students simply scheduled all of their classes at either the interim campus or on the Tenth Street facilities.

Annexation of the interim campus into Chicago Heights was another problem. Everything depended on this. If the property was not annexed the college could not purchase the site. There was also the prospect of the land becoming unavailable for leasing.

Before ground-breaking on the interim campus, the college considered annexation. In June 1968 the trustees moved to seek annexation, and in September the business manager appeared before the Chicago Heights City Council to obtain permission for tying into utility lines for water and sewage. This permission was given contingent upon the college meeting certain city requirements. Thus began another running battle between the trustees and other authorities over property and improvements which would take three and a half years to resolve. Trustees felt that the college might be cursed. The prospects for developing an interim campus, much like the prospects for developing a permanent Campus, were jeopardized. If the courts held the key to one, the Chicago Heights City Council held the key to the other.[11]

Beginning in September 1968 and for nearly a year, a testy dialogue between the council and trustees continued over annexation of 15 acres of property west of Halsted Street and north of Vollmer Road to Coolidge Street, contiguous to the interim campus site. Actually, the property in dispute was not property on which the college had built, but unless this land was annexed, the owners would not permit the college to purchase the interim site.

Verbal barbs and repartee began on 27 September 1968. The main contention developed over who should pay for the widening of Coolidge Street running north and south and forming the western boundary of the permanent campus. At this time Vollmer Road was developed to about one block west of Halsted and short of Coolidge Street which was narrow and provided one-way traffic for residents ending at Vollmer Road. A councilman stated that "just as a developer has the responsibility to provide road systems for his development, so the college has the responsibility to pay for the widening of Coolidge Street."[12] Trustee Chairman, Dale Collins, contradicted the councilman. Collins suggested that the road be paid for by the city with motor fuel tax funds, calling such a move "something fine" that the city could contribute to the college. "This is an asset to Chicago Heights," the board chairman continued. "We're not in the business of building roads around the periphery of our college. I think it only fair to have the city pay for it."[13]

A short time later the council made its case quite clear. Mayor Maurino Richton stated that "we have to take into consideration the whole area." and Commissioner George Bonick strongly questioned the suggestion that the city share the cost of the road. "The city taxpayers always take a beating," he said, "Prairie State (the district) is spread out over a much larger area than Chicago Heights. It would be unfair to use city motor fuel tax funds for a college that serves a much larger area." Commissioner John Maloni urged that before the council takes any action there should be a "clear understanding as to what the city's obligations are and what the college's are." He continued, "We want to cooperate all we can, but we also want to be fair about this. Prairie State ought to absorb the cost."[14]

The college was hardly in a strong position to bargain. Already it was operating an interim campus, and if it was to continue its commitment to operate a community college for Chicago Heights and the four townships, it had little choice at this point. It agreed to widen Coolidge Street. Other conditions which the council set were: (1) Locating a fire hydrant in the western portion of the interim facilities. (2) Providing an access road from Vollmer to the interim site for emergency vehicles. (3) Widening Coolidge Street during the first phase of construction of the permanent facilities by 12 feet for that portion of Coolidge which fronts college-owned property. The college accepted these conditions and then looked forward to annexation.[15]

When Christmas arrived and there still was no annexation the college realized that contingency plans would be needed. Without annexation, the interim campus was tenuous indeed, because land could not be purchased and expansion on the interim site would be questionable. The Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad building presented an alternate campus prospect. This building, located on Chicago Road just north of Bloom High School, consisted of 60,000 square feet of office space. The college made a down payment as insurance against future needs.[16]

Late in April 1969 relief appeared when the Chicago Heights Council voted "to recommend that the City Council approve annexation of the commercial parcel, although the college had not yet qualified for annexation."[17] With this encouragement the trustees returned to the development of the interim campus. The Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad refunded the earnest money.

Meanwhile, the college had learned that the plan was not legal because bond money, which the college intended to use for purchase of the building, could be utilized only for the acquisition of site and construction of permanent facilities for junior colleges.[18]

The second phase of the interim campus called for the construction of four buildings (G,H,I and J), similar to the original six buildings, and the moving of three relocatables (X,Y and Z) from the Tenth Street campus. This second phase also involved the first part of the fourth, or final phase of the entire campus construction. This was the erection of Building K, which would be the first of several buildings on the permanent campus. Initially, Building K served as a classroom, office, theater arts and maintenance location. Ultimately, it became a part of the permanent campus as a maintenance and warehouse center.[19]

Construction of the second phase of the interim campus moved ahead on schedule during the summer of 1969 but the City Council delayed annexation. So on 21 July a college delegation headed by Trustee Chairman Dale Collins trekked back to City Hall. The council was as adamant as ever. They insisted that no annexation would take place until improvements, including a sewer line, have been provided for the commercial site at the owner's expense. The owner, the Checker Oil Company, had refused to make the requested improvements which placed the initiative back on the college. "Can't these improvements wait until the lands are actually developed?" asked the trustee chairman. "Every time we come back to you, you increase the number of requirements for annexation."[20]

The banter continued. "These requirements must always be met by anyone seeking annexation," stated a commissioner. "The college is no exception. I admit we've changed our mind about annexing the college, but the improvements we demanded have always been known to you." The response was instant and loud. "They have not," replied Collins, heatedly, "When we went to the Plan Commission, there were only a few things we were supposed to do, and we did them. Now there's more." The frustrated trustee chairman continued, "I guess what it comes down to is that we are broke, some $400,000 in debt this year (referring to the college's deficit). We feel that the eventual developers of the land should assume the cost, not us." Commissioner Maloni responded. "But that's not the way it's done. The city has to see to it that the underground development of annexed parcels goes before, not after."[21]

Despite discouragement and disillusionment, the purchase of interim property continued. In August, five parcels of land totaling about nine acres were purchased.[22] Construction on the second phase of the interim campus was completed in time for the opening of classes in September, and the college operation moved to the interim campus except for a few health programs in St. James Hospital. Another 11 acres were purchased in November.[23] If and when the council annexed the property, the college would be at liberty to purchase the entire site.

At long last the college was located essentially in one place. But with the enlargement of the interim campus came more traffic problems. Two entrances, rather than one, now became sources of traffic jams between classes as cars lined up from Vollmer Road almost to Joe Orr Road. Still there were no traffic lights. Without annexation the question of responsibility for this remained in limbo. Chicago Heights would not install the lights, and the county was not anxious to face the problem. At this point the college expected that perhaps it would have to take care of this problem itself, since help from other sources was becoming extremely difficult to obtain.

Not being annexed into Chicago Heights, the problem of police and fire protection for the interim campus became acute. The college contracted with Chicago Heights for an annual fee plus a fee for every fire response.[24] When the lack of police protection became public knowledge the college became prey to burglars who purloined typewriters, calculators and other machinery amounting to thousands of dollars. This brought the added expense of security and made Chicago Heights even more reluctant to annex the property.[25]

Despite these setbacks the college moved forward and hired an architect to design and supervise the third phase of the interim campus in April 1970. This provided for construction of a Dental Services building which would become a part of the permanent campus.[26]

Both the interim campus and permanent campus problems seemed immune to solution. The trustees might well have asked with the poet: "Are there no stones in heaven but what serve for the thunder?" (*Othello*, V. ii) They hoped there were no more but they were beginning to have their doubts.

Attempting to Obtain a Site: Acrimony and Complexity

Prospects for acquisition of a site seemed bright, if not downright encouraging in mid-summer 1967. In June the Illinois Junior College Board had accepted the site location and granted approval for an expenditure of $6,000 per acre for the site purchase. In anticipation that the bond issue would pass (it was successful on 18 November) the trustees established a "bond fund for land acquisition and construction" and acquired the services of the Cornelius A. Baker (1892-1970) real estate firm to secure options on site property.[27]

The prospective site consisted of approximately 70 acres including 20 acres of dedicated but unimproved streets and alleys. This property originated as the Broadgate Addition to Arterial Hill and dated to the Chicago Heights Land Association of 1926. In realtors' terms it was a "paper sub-division." That is, there were no improvements, no developments underway and apparently little market for the property. The land was platted, and the 70 acres which the college wished to purchase consisted of about 587 lots each about 25 feet by 120 feet in size. More than 100 individuals owned these 587 lots. The pattern of ownership consisted of a few large holders and a host of small holders. Three individuals held claim to 312 lots comprising 53 percent of the site. Another small group owned 50 lots or 8.5 percent of the site, and two other owners held title to 36 lots or 6.1 percent of the site. Individuals and many husbands and wives together sharing ownership of one or two lots provided the pattern of ownership for the remaining 398 lots or 32.4 percent of the site. These lots, however, were not owned all together in one piece. Ownership was scattered throughout the 70 acres because that is the way the lots were sold by the original owner in 1926.[28]

The magnitude of the task became clear to the realty agent after a few days into the assignment. What with the large number of property-owners and the scattered location of the lots merely clearing title to the ownership of each lot would prove a time-consuming task in itself. This was necessary, however, before options could be taken. But the task had hardly begun when the entire venture became complicated with a lawsuit that stymied the site purchase for more than four years.

This came midway in July 1967 when the college learned that Thomas M. Borrowdale, a former structural steel-engineer, and Gladys K. Gavin had brought suit against Percy E. Wagner, Betty Joy Wagner (his daughter), and Walter F. Lovelace, an insurance agent, over ownership of 53 percent of the land which the college desired for its main campus.[29] For several months Wagner had served in an advisory capacity for the college. In a professional career of more than 50 years this was the first time he had been a litigant in a lawsuit.

Wagner became interested in the college site property when it was subdivided on 30 November 1926 as the Broadgate Addition to Arterial Hill by the Chicago Heights Land Association. At that time he and his brother bought a half interest in the Addition, and presented the property as gifts to his grandchildren and the YMCA. As the property was purchased or paid for, the money was remitted to these people and the titles were cleared.[30]

Problems arose when the lots were sold but not deeded. Thus when the lots were not completely sold, ownership reverted to the title holders, Wagner's relatives and charity owners.[31]

In March 1955 Wagner and his daughter purchased an additional number of lots in the sub-division and immediately sold them to Borrowdale, Lovelace and Virginia L. Meier in a contract which included a down payment and monthly payments with the buyers paying taxes and special assessments. The contract was extended when the buyers (Borrowdale-Lovelace-Meier) defaulted in March 1960. In August 1963 the balance due was paid and conveyed to Helen M. Flynn, a nominee of Lovelace and Borrowdale, but at this point taxes and assessments had not been paid.[32]

In 1964 Cook County filed a scavenger on foreclosure to claim the 164 lots because of unpaid taxes and assessments.[a] At this point Lovelace, acting for Borrowdale and Gladys K. Gavin, entered an agreement with Wagner for a mortgage on the 164 lots and Wagner made it mandatory by Quit Claim their right to title on this property. Borrowdale apparently did not know of this transaction, claimed that this exceeded Lovelace's authority and this became part of the basis for the law suit.[33]

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[a] A scavenger is a real estate term to describe the sale of property on which taxes are unpaid in an attempt to sell the property to a buyer who will pay the unpaid taxes.

On 11 July 1966 Borrowdale addressed the Chicago Heights City Council with a plan for a $35 million shopping center which he described as the "Joe Orr Road Complex" to be located west of Halsted Street and between Vollmer Road and Joe Orr Road (the location of the ultimate site of the Main Campus). He stated that this would be "a fabulous project and that it would be a motel, condominium apartments, exhibition hall, theater, stores and parking for eight thousand cars, and that it would be financed with private funds."[34] This plan "was referred to the council and ordered placed on file."[35] The plan remained dormant for several months.

On 9 January 1967 Wagner declared a forfeiture on the mortgage and early in March 1967, F. Carr Price, chairman of the Site Selection Committee for the college, approached Wagner to serve as an adviser on the site selection, apparently unaware that Wagner had an interest in the property which the college had selected as its first choice for a site.[36] The day after the college announced selection of its first choice (19 May 1967) Borrowdale offered to pay Wagner the amount of the mortgage which Wagner declined.

At this point Borrowdale launched a determined effort to change the plans for locating the college on the Halsted site. On 6 July he wrote the college trustees charging "that the Chicago Heights downtown shopping center is dead and that the college district is eliminating the town's last chance to build a new shopping district by buying the land in the Joe Orr-Halsted area."[37] Then on 15 July he filed suit against Wagner and Lovelace to clarify and determine ownership of 53 percent of the land for the college site.

For the next three months Borrowdale continued his campaign to alter the college's site selection in meetings with the Chicago Heights City Council. Late in September he proposed that the city abandon its downtown urban renewal plan and instead back his plan for a $35 million business complex on the site. Reading from a six-page typewritten statement and exhibiting drawings and charts, he suggested that the downtown area be turned into a residential development of condominiums and apartments. He charged that urban renewal is "doubtful, time-consuming, inequitable and undemocratic" and would not ultimately return the city to a place of business leadership. On the other hand, he contended the "private enterprise" proposal for a major shopping development at the Joe Orr Road site would bring "total progress" to the city. Tax income would be increased too, he suggested as he presented charts and figures.[38]

In a final meeting which he labeled the "blessing meeting," perhaps because the council took no steps to halt the location of the college and thus blessed the establishment of the college at the proposed site, on 2 October 1967, Borrowdale "demanded that the City Council take action to stop the appropriation of this land by the school taxing body."[39] The meeting became a bit noisy and voices were raised. Trustee chairman Dale Collins, heading the college contingent in attendance, advised Borrowdale that the property ownership was in a state of confusion. Mayor Maurino Richton stated that he believed it would be of significant benefit to the city to have the college located in Chicago Heights. Three council members said they were interested in studying Borrowdale's proposals.[40] In a final note Borrowdale wrote the trustees two weeks later that "the college site selected could be better served as a shopping center."[41]

Thus the college found itself in a frustrating position as the fall semester began in 1967. On one hand it had the power under Eminent Domain and Condemnation to proceed to purchase a site which had been approved by authorities. On the other hand, it could not take action to purchase 53 percent of the site or more than 26 acres because the property was under questionable ownership and the subject of court action. Adding to the frustration the college found itself in an unwanted adversarial contest against interests which preferred that the decision to locate a college on the site be revoked and the site devoted to construction of a shopping plaza. The issue seemed clear and simple. What would it be, a college or a shopping plaza?

Further complications developed when preliminary appraisals of the site property indicated that the cost would exceed the limit of $6,000 per acre originally approved by the Illinois Junior College Board. Court intervention on the land acquisition also compelled architectural revisions of costs. Original estimates were based on the assumption that part of the property would be acquired in 1967. In view of the court action this appeared impossible.[42]

The college's next step was to go to the Illinois Junior College Board to request a higher ceiling price on the property. The state board granted this on 10 November 1967.[43]

Upon receiving approval of a higher ceiling on the property the trustees took immediate action on 10 November 1967 filing condemnation proceedings under right of eminent domain on the property for the permanent campus in Circuit Court of Cook County against the Wagner, Lovelace and Borrowdale group covering 229 lots in the 50-acre site.[44] This historic event marked the first time the college initiated a law suit.

Meanwhile, the Baker realty firm continued to seek options on the property not under court action. This involved about 23 acres but many landowners were involved so the process was arduous and slow. In some cases many heirs were involved; it took months to identify these people, trace titles and court records and put the property in order before offers for options could be made. Some offers which the trustees extended through the agent were accepted. Others were refused in anticipation that the pending court decisions would provide higher prices.[45]

Fifteen months after the first action, the college initiated condemnation proceedings for 64 more lots in two other suits on 5 February 1969 bringing the total to 293 lots under condemnation and still in the courts.[46] Meanwhile the course of obtaining options continued at a slow pace. By June 1969 only 20 percent of the site property had been purchased.[47]

The logjam of court cases broke on 1 October 1969 when the Borrowdale and Wagner case was settled out of court with the Borrowdale interests awarded ownership of the 229 lots in question.[48] On 29 October the three cases involving all the condemnation proceedings on 279 lots were consolidated and "the parties stipulated that the lots 'shall be tried as one parcel of property' and that a single verdict and judgment covering compensation for the whole should be rendered" It was also stipulated that "the value should be determined as of 10 November 1967."[49]

Now that the Borrowdale interests had established ownership, the issue was to determine the value of the property on the day condemnation procedures began. The plaintiffs (the college) argued that "the highest and best use of the subject property was for predominantly single-family residential development...[and] the fair cash market value of defendants' lots as of 10 November 1967, was $195,000." The defendants argued that the property should be valued as commercial property. "The value of the property," they argued, "as a site suitable for commercial development was set by several expert witnesses at well over a million dollars...[and] one of the owners of the property testified that even under existing residential zoning the property was worth an average of $3,000 per lot." In less than three weeks on 20 November 1969 the Circuit Court of Cook County decided in favor of the college.[50]

Already having established the unenviable record of taking the longest time to purchase site property of any junior college in Illinois, it appeared that the college was free at last to proceed with condemnation, gain possession of the property and move on to construction. But hopes were soon dashed. The case was appealed and went back into the courts. Now the Third Illinois Appellate Court would have to hear the case. Meanwhile, the college could not proceed to take options on the property. The final judgment would take more than two years.

After three years of delay the college could not attest to "the mills of the Gods running exceedingly fine" but it could attest to the courts running exceedingly slow. Consequences of the delay were drastic.

Not the least of the consequences was that it revived old tensions and intra-community strains, especially during the several months before the recently-annexed districts could elect representatives to the trustees and take their positions in April 1968. In October Lester Kloss, who had been a prime mover in the annexation movement and had recommended the annexation configuration wrote the Executive Secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board that "inasmuch as the recently annexed districts do not have any voting power at this time, I feel that I have no recourse but to protest to you and rely upon your board's sense of fair play." He continued, "I could not, in good conscience, ask the taxpayers of Rich Township to support a bond issue, knowing full well that part of those funds would be used to purchase land at $7,000 to $10,000 per acre when I knew that more desirable land was available at $4,500 to $6,000 per acre. My sense of ethics and responsibility would compel me to actively lead a fight against a bond referendum presented under the existing terms."[51]

In another letter to the secretary he continued in the same vein. "Had the District 515 Board made a thorough search of the area, instead of being so blindly committed to a Chicago Heights site, the State of Illinois would not now be faced with an unnecessary 'premium' of almost $500,000 on this purchase."[52] Much to his credit, however, Kloss did not lead such a fight and as a matter of fact he supported the bond issue.

"I think one of the biggest problems that we had," said one of the trustees, "was the fact that once it became known that the college was interested in this property that grew nothing but weeds and that nobody could develop that they couldn't get sewers or water into because they couldn't get the rights, then suddenly became so valuable you would think they had struck gold or oil on the property. That was very discouraging to me personally."[53]

The process of getting options and purchasing land led to public charges of secretive negotiations on the part of the trustees. Trustees themselves became irked at the lack of information on land purchases, leading to trustee-administrative tensions.[54]

Much more critical, however, was the threat that the delay might cost the college $5 million in credit toward its permanent campus building. The college was allocated $5 million during the 76th biennium for construction purposes but since the land was not purchased and construction impossible there was the danger that this allotment might be forfeited. Gerald W. Smith, executive secretary of the Junior College Board, however, was able to effect a trade with another junior college to take the allotment so Prairie State

College could take another allotment during a later biennium when construction could begin.[55]

Another painful consequence of the delay in purchasing property was that it victimized the college in the economy measures of Governor Richard B. Ogilvie (1923-1988). On 24 January 1969 the governor announced a freeze on funds affecting construction of public buildings, including public junior colleges, as an economic, and anti-inflation measure. This freezing of state funds aborted bids on the campus construction project while costs continued to rise by roughly 1 per cent or nearly $90,000 per month.[56] Thus cost overrides grew worse.

As the summer of 1970 began, the college established a dubious record. It became the Illinois junior college with the longest waiting period in obtaining property for a permanent campus. Moreover, only about 27 percent of the property had been purchased; the courts were still pondering the case. The college had become embroiled in a struggle with commercial interests attempting to increase the costs. As if this were not enough, a state-invoked freeze delayed bids and increased costs further.

Financing, 1967-1970: From the Heights to the Depths

There were also perennial and ongoing internal issues. Of the constant problems confronting any college none is more real than that of financing. Unlike private enterprises, colleges are not expected to produce a profit, but they are accountable to the public and are expected to operate efficiently. Like private enterprises, they are affected by the economy in general but unlike private enterprises they are constrained by larger public forces, all of which make the task of efficiency a difficult one. Illinois Junior College District Number 515 in the late 1960s confronted this responsibility with great expectations which were turned to grim realities and somber prospects within three years.

As the college turned toward larger horizons in the fall of 1967 the financial structure remained essentially the same as that which had supported the institution from the founding. This fiscal support, however, was reinforced and enhanced under terms of the Public Junior College Act (1965).

The budget at this time consisted of two general categories of expenses, the educational fund and the building fund. Among other items, the educational fund consisted of salaries, educational supplies and auxiliary services for students. Building fund expenses related largely to maintenance and other items concerning physical facilities.

As the fall semester began in 1967 each of these budget categories faced large expenditures. A substantial number of experienced faculty indicated that a large part of the educational fund would need to be expended for salaries to place the faculty on a salary schedule that would meet competitive standards.[57] The building fund expenditure faced an even greater problem. The college was in the process of purchasing property for building a campus which required a large sum of money. There were steps available that could alleviate the problems.

To appreciate the financial problems facing the college in 1967 it is necessary to understand how the college was funded. As a public institution most funding came from taxation: state and local. State funding came through an apportionment per semester-hour of coursework that each student took in an accredited course. For a student taking 15 hours of coursework the college was eligible to receive the apportionment per semester-hour multiplied by 15. These funds came from the Illinois Higher Education allotment which was appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly. Thus Illinois Junior College Number 515 and other junior colleges shared their funds with the other state-supported colleges. Unfortunately, when tax payments did not meet the amount of state expenditures, these outlays were reduced and college funds along with other state allotments were cut.

Local taxes covered part of the costs. These taxes were raised by a tax rate for educational purposes and a tax rate for building purposes based on an equalized hundred dollars of assessed valuation on the real property in the college district. As property values rose the college realized more local tax income; as the tax rate increased more local tax income was realized.

A third main source of income for operating the college was fees which students pay for tuition and other expenses. Other sources, including federal aid, provided some funding.

On balance, as the fall semester began in 1967, it would seem that the college faced rather large financial obstacles in view of the commitment to purchasing property and constructing a campus.

As a Class I junior college in the Illinois state junior college system the college was eligible to issue bonds "for the purpose of borrowing money to pay the cost to acquire a site for junior college purposes, to improve said site, and to build and equip suitable buildings."[58] Local college district approval, however, was needed in a referendum before these bonds could be issued. Then the state of Illinois would double the amount of local bond funds, making the amount of funds available equal to nearly three times those of the local commitment. The college district seized this opportunity and on 18 November 1967, by a three to one margin, passed a $7.9 million bond issue to acquire property and build a campus. With matching state funds the construction of a campus of more than $20 million seemed assured.

And with its credit enhanced by millions of dollars by the authorization of bond funds, the college proceeded to purchase property for the new campus site from operational funds already on hand with the assumption that these funds would be replaced by funds from the building bonds when issued.[59] Investors Services gave the college credit a substantial "A" rating.[60] Indeed, at this point the college seemed to be on a firm, financial footing.

Bolstered by a strong credit rating on 7 March 1968 the college proceeded to issue tax anticipation warrants to raise immediate funds.[b] At the same time the trustees accepted a bid to sell $3.5 million in bonds.[61] There still seemed no reason for serious financial concern.

Within a month a thunderbolt struck the college and the entire Illinois junior college system in the form of a lawsuit filed on 4 April. A group of dissident taxpayers in Warren County charged that the Illinois Junior College Act violated the United States Supreme Court's rule of "one man, one vote" and that the act discriminated against a large part of the state because it granted a more favorable formula for state building aid to larger junior college districts than to smaller districts.[c]

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[b] A tax anticipation warrant is a financial instrument which school districts often employ to raise immediate funds. It is issued against future tax collections and the interest is deducted at the time of the transaction.

The effect of this lawsuit was sudden and critical. Upon the filing of the suit and pending its outcome the law firm which validated school building bonds and tax warrants halted approval of bond sales. This action amounted to freezing the $84 million in bonds of the Illinois Junior College Board and approximately $70 million in bonds for 14 of the 34 junior college districts in the state, including the $3.5 million of Prairie State College.[62] For Illinois Junior College Number 515 this meant refusal to approve the issue of $400,000 in tax anticipation warrants necessary for the operation of the college. The financial picture of the college turned from bright to darkest hue.

In a move to solve quickly the constitutionality of the Junior College Act and to avoid critical and crippling delays for the entire state system junior college supporters decided to test the law. State Attorney Edward F. Drolet, of Kankakee County, filed a case against the trustees of Kankakee Junior College District Number 520. Included in the case were all questions raised by the Warren County dissenters plus all the points raised by the bonding authorities. The Circuit Court of Kankakee County held the Act constitutional in all respects but the case was appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court which affirmed the judgment of the lower court on 3 July 1968. "It was the only case I ever prosecuted," said the State Attorney, "that I wanted to lose."[63]

Attorneys for the Warren County taxpayers, however, filed a petition to intervene as friends of the court on the Kankakee case. Upon the decision of the Supreme Court, the Circuit Court of Warren County refused to allow the Warren taxpayers to file their petition. When the attorneys for the Warren County taxpayers petitioned the Supreme Court to reconsider their decision on the basis of the "one man, one vote" rule, the Supreme Court refused to rehear the case on 15 August. This closed the door to any further constitutional tests in Illinois courts.

In view of this court approval, the bonding authorities issued a favorable opinion thus opening the way to the issue of more than $150 million of Illinois junior college bonds including $3.5 million for Junior College District 515.[64] "Should the pending court action testing the constitutionality of the Illinois Junior College Act be further delayed," wrote President Hostrop on 17 May, "it is anticipated that Prairie State College will be unable to meet any further payrolls for its academic and non-academic staff after 15 June 1968."[65]

On 19 September the college resold its bonds. The final closing and delivery of the bonds was effected early in October. Though it was necessary to sell the bonds twice and the delay inflicted a hardship, the detainment was not all detrimental. When the bonds were sold a second time, the interest rate was lower and represented a saving of $216,000 to the college in terms of interest payments over the entire life of the bonds.[66]

Settlement of the lawsuits and resale of the bonds restored optimism that the fiscal state of the college was again sound. But the appearance was deceiving. Something else was afoot. This was inflation. Professional economists may define the term as too much money chasing too few goods. The average citizen knows the problem as prices rising more rapidly than paychecks, making it extremely difficult to make ends meet. By whatever definition, the consequences were crippling and sinister.

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[c] For an account of this episode see: Richard G. Sherman, "Constitutionalism and the Illinois Community College System: A Case of Dissenting Taxpayers," *Illinois Historical Journal*, 83 (Summer 1990) 85-96.

Early in the 1960s the United States economy was moving upward if not booming but about the same time came involvement in an undeclared war in Vietnam. Toward the end of 1965 consumer prices were climbing at an annual rate of nearly 3 percent and the Federal Reserve was worrying about inflation. In December 1965 the discount rate was raised to 4.5 percent. By 1969 many fully-employed workers had less real income than in 1968. The agony of fighting inflation continued for nearly two decades. Along with individuals and the whole economy, colleges like Illinois Junior College 515 felt the subtle sinews of inflation.[67]

Sometimes the sinews were not so subtle. By the late 1960s the trustees could see clearly what was happening by looking at the budget. The operating budget adopted for 1967-1968 was $1.6 million while the operating budget adopted for the 1969-1970 year was $2.8 million, representing an increase of 76.7 percent. Furthermore, the 1969-1970 budget represented an increase of 27 percent over the previous year. Inflation was indeed loose in the land and the trustees felt "a way should be found to balance the budget."[68]

Additional funds to some extent were drawn upon. In 1967, non-credit courses were made fundable by the state for continuing education thereby increasing state aid. Federal funds increased to $303,412 during the 1969-1970, year and the assessed evaluation of the district increased, providing more local tax support.[69] But these additional funds still fell short of expenditures. Other measures were needed to bring the budget into balance.

This need for funds brought about the suggestion of a College Foundation in September 1968 at a meeting of the President's Cabinet. "It was concluded," at this time, "that it would be highly desirable to rapidly proceed toward the establishment of a not-for-profit incorporated Prairie State College Foundation whose purpose would be to solicit and receive gifts of cash endowments, property, works of art, historical documents, and academic chairs. It was also thought that such lay citizens' efforts could result in the foundation directors concomitantly becoming in fact, if not in name, a general advisory committee...It was also agreed that strong, built-in constitutional safeguards must be provided so that the foundation directors did not dictate board policies, but rather respond to board policies and the needs of the students and citizens of the district."[70]

At the end of its first year as a separate college the need for increased revenue for operating purposes was quite clear. Apparent also was the inequity between three sources of financial support. In 1967, state aid and tuition together provided 62.1 percent of the college's income as compared to 37.9 percent that local taxes supplied. State aid and student tuition were already sustaining more than their fair share of the costs. Despite this inequity tuition was raised to acquire additional revenue.

By 1969 there seemed no other option than to go to the local taxpayers for a referendum to raise the tax rate. This rate was among the lowest of any junior college in the state. In late 1968 there began a series of three unsuccessful attempts to raise the local levy during a period of 16 months. The first came on 21 December 1968 in a special election. There were two parts to the proposition and voters were asked to vote on each one. The first was to raise the educational rate from nine cents to 17 cents; and the second was to raise the building fund from three cents to 10 cents per hundred dollars of assessed evaluation. Neither issue came close to passing. Both the educational and building rate carried only 28.7 percent.[71]

Five months later on 12 April 1969 the college presented a second referendum seeking the same two rate increases. Results again were a resounding "no," though not quite so negative. This time the educational fund carried 36.3 percent of the vote while the building fund brought 35.1 percent support, both far from the majority needed.[72]

In March 1970 the college went to the voters a third time with essentially the same two issues. This time, however, the proposition was to raise the building rate by five cents rather than eight cents. From the college point of view, results were even worse. The educational issue carried only 26.5 percent while the building rate carried by 27.1 percent.[73] The verdict was quite clear. The community was definitely not interested in digging into its pocket for tax dollars to support the college anywhere near an equitable basis with state support and tuition.

As the spring semester closed in 1970, the financial plight of the college was grave. The accumulated deficit in the operating fund was $573,000. Tuition was $10 per semester hour, among the highest of Illinois junior colleges and the college had borrowed to the maximum on tax anticipation warrants.[74] The only relief was an increase in state funding which was hardly encouraging. The prospect of deficit financing was so dismal that it led to the resignation of a trustee. She stated that her "decision...was based purely on the fact that [I cannot] continue to serve the purposes of deficit financing."[75]

The financial plight of the college as the summer of 1970 arrived was not unique or unusual. Dissident taxpayers had utilized the legal system to lodge their protest, but the outcome was only a delay in the advancement of the college as well as other junior colleges in the state. It was hardly a mortal wound. What had begun with high hopes in 1967 had turned to a dismal outlook by 1970.

CHAPTER TEN

TURMOIL STRIKES IN THE LATE SIXTIES

In the history of any nation there are watershed decades---decades which mark sharp changes or reactions. The United States has had its share of these signal periods, one of which was the 1960s. Early in this decade the president of the United States was assassinated. A few years later a civil rights leader suffered the same fate and a few weeks afterwards the late president's brother fell to another assassin. It was a period of tumultuous social upheaval. Few American institutions suffered this convulsion as much as education. Prairie State College did not escape the turmoil which struck sharply in faculty tenure, curriculum revision and in student protests.

The Civil Rights Movement Arrives

Perhaps the most powerful force that motivated American society during the sixties was the Civil Rights Movement. It spurred and guided a wide variety of other movements including women's rights and the rights of minorities. This cause came to Prairie State College in a case involving the retention of a tenured teacher who happened to be an African-American.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352) aimed to protect every citizen from gross exploitation, from unfair competition, from irrational discrimination and from being cheated out of opportunities that belong to the general population. It challenged the most glaring contradictions in American society and spurred and guided a wide variety of other movements which questioned the gap between American ideals and American reality. Besides the rights of minorities and women, the movement motivated the drive for peace in Southeast Asia, anti-nuclear groups and new environmental organizations.[1]

That tenure was the fundamental issue in two of the three cases should come as no surprise because tenure is fundamental to faculty security and academic freedom. Tenure is a condition of quasi-permanent appointment which a teacher holds. Academic tenure traces to the origins of universities in the High Middle Ages when teachers or professors governed themselves in a collegial setting. As colleges grew larger and more complex in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the need for organizers or administrators placed this segment between the faculty and the trustees of colleges. Teachers thus became vulnerable to the arbitrary actions of administrators in matters of employment. To protect against this possibility of capricious action, colleges and universities adopted the condition of tenure. Achieving tenure requires a trial period of a few years during which time dismissal can be effected only on serious charges.

Tenure became a matter of concern for the entire Prairie State College faculty during the fall semester of 1967, because the college was in the process of forming policy as a separate institution. Since July 1966 the college had been operating on the policies, including tenure, of Bloom High School. Tenure practices of high schools generally differ from those of colleges. In secondary schools tenure is awarded after a shorter period of probation than in colleges. Where high schools grant tenure after one or two years, colleges require a much longer period, usually between seven and 10 years. Existing tenure probation for Prairie State College was three years under the high school policy but this was being revised. If probation was to be changed to a longer term the entire faculty would need to be reevaluated for tenure.

Evaluation became the critical factor. Who would make the evaluation and what would be the criteria? If responsibility for tenure was to rest with the administration only, this would represent a threat to the faculty because the two top administrators were newcomers to the college. Administrative suggestions that evaluation might include the use of videotape techniques evoked prompt reaction from the faculty. "The thought of videotape terrifies me," said one faculty member. "Evaluation in my opinion represents both reputation and money. Therefore, if a vote is taken in the Assembly, I shall vote against evaluation."[2] This faculty member, however, did not oppose evaluation. "I believe in faculty evaluation," she stated, "but I think it must be done by faculty and I think it must hinge on the evaluation that it does for the instructor before he becomes a tenured instructor."[3] This statement was generally shared by the faculty.

Two women faculty members who were under consideration for retention for the 1968-1969 year brought the tenure and evaluation problem to attention. In one case, a journalism and English instructor and adviser to the student newspaper was not recommended by the department chairman, also a female, and she was not retained. In the other case, the director of the music program was seeking tenure and was not retained on recommendation of the administration. Instead, she accepted an agreement with the trustees. These dismissals evoked prompt protest from the faculty which adopted two resolutions of "no confidence in the manner, the method and the final decision the administration has recommended to the board on the subject of renewal of the contracts" of these two teachers.[4]

There is no evidence that failure to retain these two women evoked any protest on the grounds of violation of women's rights and sexual discrimination. A third case involving the attempt to dismiss a tenured teacher did, however, bring the college adjacently into the civil rights struggle and under community scrutiny. This was the case of William H. Townsend Jr., at that time, the first and only black teacher on the faculty.

During the spring semester of 1967 the administration received reports from students that Townsend was failing to meet his classes without explanation. He gave no explanation to the administration for these absences but gave assurances that they would be stopped. The practice continued in the fall semester of 1967 with similar responses.

When the State Universities Retirement System advised Prairie State College that the system was receiving retirement withholdings for Townsend from Wilson Junior College in Chicago as well as Prairie State it became known that for more than a year Townsend had held two full-time appointments. Holding full-time appointments at two colleges made it impossible for him not to miss some classes at both colleges.[5] Though not illegal, this was a highly questionable practice and one which the trustees believed called for dismissal despite his tenured position.[*]

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[*] Remarkable as it may seem, Yale University experienced precisely the same phenomenon in 1971, when Professor Kenneth Mills, also an African-American, held a full-time, tenured position at the Stony Brook, Long Island campus of the State University of New York while holding a full-time appointment at Yale University. (*The New York Times*, 29 February 1972.) Yale dismissed Mills. Again Prairie State College was in the vanguard. This time the college was two years ahead of Yale University but for being involved with a rather dubious practice.

Townsend was advised of the board's position and told that a decision on his status would be made at a subsequent meeting. At the trustees meeting of 12 December 1968 the college felt the abrupt emotional and volatile impact of civil rights. In an executive session with Townsend the board was discussing his position when two persons, who identified themselves as representatives of the Black Panthers and the Black Students Union, interrupted and stated that they would "sit as representatives in the remaining portion of the executive session."[6] This terminated the executive session and left those in attendance amazed if not in shock.

What had been a difficult personnel problem at best now became next to impossible to deal with on its merits with the interjection of racial overtones. "I wish Mr. Townsend was white," said the trustee chairman. "Then we wouldn't have a problem."[7]

The real issue remained fairness and the chairman emphasized this in a letter to his fellow trustees on 16 January 1969 when he wrote:

> The event that took place at a Prairie State College Board meeting several weeks ago disturbs me greatly. The fact that the meeting was interrupted and one portion of the meeting was summarily terminated causes my concern.
>
> I believe that we as a board shall have to answer the question. How is our philosophy of fairness and equality for all mankind going to be implemented here in our own community?
>
> I believe that we as a board represent all the people of our community--this includes the majority as well as the minority.
>
> I do believe that we must make an extra effort for all of our deprived, whether it be culturally, economically, intellectually or any other way. This extra effort, however, must not be at the expense of discriminating for or against any individual or group, be it majority or minority.
>
> Therefore, in the future, I believe we must stand steadfast in our actions and treat all people and all situations fairly without regard to race, color or creed. We must not be coerced my any group, large or small, into actions that will not reflect the philosophy of fairness to all at all times.[8]

The issue of fairness which the Prairie State College trustees confronted and properly identified, especially as it relates to civil rights, continued to confront the courts for more than a decade.

As the year 1968 closed the "Townsend Affair" remained unresolved. Resolution remained for another hectic trustee meeting.

Instituting A Black Studies Program

Located and controlled at the grassroots level, community colleges move in proportion to the degree in which they serve community needs. Sensing this need to develop communication and liaison lines in the late 1960s, Prairie State College formed a Citizens Advisory Council, and established the first community college Black Studies program in Illinois. The program, however, was not without the stresses and strains of the civil rights movement sweeping the nation at that time.

There are various ways of judging community interest in a college. An empirical method is to observe the number of concerned citizens who attend board meetings. During the first two and a half years after the college became separate, the number of citizens attending trustee meetings increased steadily. In September 1966 when the first budget was approved, not a single visitor attended. A year later, however, several citizens attended and thereafter few meetings were held without several visitors. At times trustee meetings drew dozens of people depending on the issues on the agenda.

With these larger numbers of visitors comments from the floor became more frequent. With the many important problems confronting the college, these meetings grew longer and evoked criticism from the public because the board took much time to dispose of issues before the public was able to present its views. Sensing dissatisfaction, the trustees decided to hold a meeting devoted entirely to public discussion of any matters of concern. Board meetings were regularly scheduled for the second and fourth Thursdays each month; but January 1969 had a fifth Thursday for an Open Forum meeting. Thus, on 30 January 1969 the public was invited to the first Open Forum session.

In anticipation of a large turnout the meeting was held in the college library, the largest room on the campus. Besides many faculty members, more than 100 visitors had gathered when the meeting opened, a far cry from the first few meetings held after the college became a separate institution. The atmosphere was tense. Everyone sensed antagonism in the room. Here was a chance to "let it all hang out." All the conflicts, tensions and problems which had been building up for more than a year came to a head. It was a meeting that the press described as a "disaster," "honest dialogue," and "a beginning."[9]

As expected, the "Townsend Affair" was the first issue considered. At the previous board meeting the trustees had delivered an opinion on the matter. They had stated that they believed that full-time employment at two institutions for any faculty member was improper and the board was confident that Townsend was aware of this.[10] Official action, however, had not been taken. So in an effort to diffuse the issue the board moved that the "Townsend case be dropped due to the circumstances under which he has come under fire and since racial strife has developed."[11] Thus the floor was cleared for other discussion. There was plenty.

In the audience was William A. Jackson, a black Doctor of Medicine of Park Forest. Jackson had been following events at the college for some time. He believed that there was "a crisis, an educational crisis in fact," at Prairie State College.[12] Jackson asked to address the board and was recognized.

He proceeded to read a letter addressed to the trustees entitled: "1 Plus 1 Equal 3, Problem and Solution at Prairie State." He stated that the problem can be best defined as "a lack of two-way communication, knowledge and understanding." He continued to state that "the common denominator in the questions raised by all sides is, what is going on, how can I learn more, and what can or should I do about it?" He proposed seven recommendations as follows:

> 1) A non-partisan organization to assist in exposing candidates and issues to the public, such as the tax referendum.
>
> 2) A Citizens Advisory Board to cooperate and assist in developing the community aspect of the college, not to be appointed by the governing board, but recognized by it, possibly nominated or organized by the non-partisan organization. The purpose would be to assess community opinion, sentiment, needs and suggestions; to recommend programs to the college; to help expand and direct the growth; and maintain favorable college and community relations.
>
> 3) Community programs at the college by community people and well-known speakers and authorities.
>
> 4) An ethnic studies department, with cooperation between ethnic groups and social studies, humanities and other departments.
>
> 5) A 12-week lecture series on community problems or events at the college.
>
> 6) A permanent public forum each fifth Thursday or more frequently.
>
> 7) Priority to the human side of college problems and situations which would allow public expression before business (board) meetings.[13]

These recommendations touched off a lengthy and loud round of discussion with many people talking at once. The question was asked about the faculty and its involvement with policy making. Faculty Senate President, Thomas J. McKillip rose to answer. "There are philosophical differences," he stated, "between the faculty and the administration and between the faculty and the board. This power struggle is likely to go on. The faculty should run the college."[14] This statement of faculty frustration inadvertently precipitated a loud outburst.

A youth stood up and shouted. "My main purpose here," he stated, "is to tear this school up. You get some black teachers here. If you don't get them here, the sky is the limit. We'll burn you down. Let's go!"[15] Approximately 50 black people in attendance walked out, reducing the audience by half. The meeting soon closed.

As the meeting broke up there were some who were visibly shaken while most were surprised in the least. But the response of the trustees was prompt and expected.

At the next board meeting the trustees responded to the recommendations stating that in most cases action was already being taken. The board, however, was quick to welcome the recommendation for a General Citizens' Advisory Council and formally established one at the next board meeting.[16] The Advisory Council was organized with W. A. Jackson as chairman.[17]

The first need which the Citizens Advisory Council addressed was the establishment of an Afro-American or Black Studies program. Several faculty members had urged such a program prior to the open forum meeting of 30 January. The Social Science department under Chairman Raymond Lindstrand moved forward quickly to formulate such a program.

The program of black studies, prepared by the Social Science department, was submitted to the Citizens Advisory Council and approved promptly.[18] The plan called for a program of Black Studies to be established within the Division of Social Science as a program separate and distinct from the other programs and departments of the division. The plan called for a director to supervise the program with advice and support from the Social Science chairman. The plan also recommended that the program be given departmental status as soon as student enrollment and program development warranted, but no later than September 1971. The board approved this program, and Black Studies at Prairie State College was established on 30 March 1969 to operate at least until September 1971.[19] In July, the Board of Higher Education approved the program and Prairie State College became the first junior college in Illinois to present a program of black studies.[20]

Initiating a Black Studies program presented several problems. A director needed to be selected, and for this important assignment the college appointed Benjamin G. Cooke on 1 July 1969. A native of Kentucky, Cooke had been a grade-school teacher in the Chicago public schools for several years upon his appointment at Prairie State College. He held a degree of Bachelor of Arts from Chicago State College and a degree of Master of Arts in Inner City Studies from Northeastern College in Chicago.[21]

A second problem with the Black Studies program was selecting a course of studies. The program was "established within the division of Social Science as a program separate and distinct from the other programs and departments of the division," but from the outset it was expected to "evolve into an ethnic studies department no later than September 1971."[22] The question of a distinction between black studies and ethnic studies was raised. "The only difference, if there is any," stated W. A. Jackson, "would be in the scope of the study of ethnology of all groups that ... possibly could be studied in a given point of time. A Black Studies program might have an emphasis which would be mainly on the study of black people in America, South America, the Caribbean, wherever they might be. The difference would be merely in scope, not in character."[23]

A third problem in connection with the Black Studies program proved to be the most difficult to resolve. This was financing or deciding how much funds would be allocated to launch the program during the first year. This triggered a misunderstanding of the commitment of the trustees to the Black Studies program. The director of the Black Studies program and at least one trustee held that the commitment required a much larger share of budget funds than was allocated. The trustees, however, held that because of restricted funds the district could not grant the amount requested by the program director. The result was that the trustees increased the Black Studies budget-allotment 23.7 percent above the original figure but only 54.5 percent of the total amount the program director requested.

An adjacent problem developed over the direct communication of a trustee with faculty and staff, confusing and complicating the budget issue.

Originally the amount of $37,000 was allocated to the Black Studies program, but soon after his appointment, Director Cooke urged an increase and $5,000 was added to the appropriation coming from a reduction in amounts already allocated to other departments.[24] Not satisfied, the director strongly urged that an additional $52,000 be budgeted to "put some meat on the skeleton" of the program. This amount would provide

$20,000 to finance guest lectures; $20,000 to provide for office staffing; $5,000 for conferences; $4,000 for consultants; and $3,000 to establish a Center for Black Culture.[25]

Another volatile board meeting erupted when these demands were presented to the trustees on 21 August 1969. "The question before the board," stated Trustee Jackson, "is will you honor a commitment even though it was not put down in technical contract language back in February 1969?"[26] This evoked a strong reaction from several board members. The chairman presented the trustee position. "Mr. Cooke is no Messiah," stated the chairman. "Nor is his program the only one that is right. His might be inadequate or it might be too much and I don't believe this board should be taken to task for disagreeing with Mr. Cooke's proposal because I do not believe that he is the only person who can start a Black Studies program. There is no set pattern for this type of program. It is something that is evolving; so if ours evolves a little bit differently than Mr. Cooke proposes then I don't believe that we should be accused of not having a good Black Studies program."[27] The board then voted to retain the original tentative-budget of $42,000.[28]

During the heated meeting, the issue of Trustee Jackson's actions in talking directly to faculty staff was raised. In his earnest efforts to help establish the Black Studies program, Jackson had conferred directly with faculty and staff members. Jackson did not deny that he had talked to faculty and staff but did not see this action as improper. Board members expressed concern about the propriety of a trustee going directly to faculty and staff for information. The president, who argued that communication between trustees and faculty should go through his office, readily agreed. Before the meeting closed, Trustee Jackson stated his intention to resign.[29]

The confused conclusion of this 21 August trustee meeting left the Black Studies program in jeopardy and the trustees in disarray. At this point the Citizens' Advisory Committee stepped in with two recommendations. The committee urged a compromise meeting between the Black Studies director and the trustees "to develop a compromise budget, plausible to both, to increase the tentative budget of $42,000 adopted by the board to a more reasonable amount that will enable Mr. Cooke to develop his program more effectively." Second, the Advisory Committee recommended that "the college look at the community lecture series and develop a means of financing it as self-supporting as possible."[30]

Another large audience attended the next trustee meeting, many of them members of the Advisory Committee concerned about the budgeting problem for Black Studies. Before considering the budget problem, however, the board moved on the Jackson issue. A policy amendment that would channel communication between the board and faculty or staff through the President's Office was discussed at length. The discussion was heated at times, and the amendment was tabled.[31]

As the statutory deadline for adoption of the budget approached, the Black Studies allocation remained an issue. On 29 September 1969 only minutes before the deadline, the trustees came to an agreement on the budget. By dipping into previously unallocated surplus funds, an additional $5,501 was found for the Black Studies, bringing the total amount for Black Studies to $48,510 compared to the original request of $89,000.[32] The trustees decided that the district commitment to the Black Studies program was 54.5 percent of the amount requested and 23.7 percent more than the amount originally requested. Granted, such a hypothetical evaluation of the program was not valid. There could be no accurate measure of the commitment to the program but the trustees made it clear that the district was committed to the program firmly for at least two years.

Among the first speakers in the guest lecture and cultural enrichment series were Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Ind., and Rev. Jesse Jackson.[33] As recommended by the Advisory Council, these lectures were funded largely from other, self-supporting sources. These fees brought opposition from trustees. Doris Hill protested. "Inquiry has shown," she stated, that Mr. Cooke has not prepared a schedule with the administration in carrying out his program within the approximate fund allocation. I cannot authorize expenditure."[34] In rebuttal, Jackson stated, "I think this is going to be a critical decision for this board because it is going to tell a lot of people how the board functions in implementing its own decisions and commitments. More than that," he continued, "it is going to tell the community how it feels about services to the community. I think it is too good to turn down and hope the other board members can see the validity of having this program."[35] With one abstention, the vote passed 3 to 2. The Black Studies program, was underway despite remaining strains.

With Open Forum sessions Prairie State College demonstrated again that community colleges move forward in proportion to the extent that they respond to local needs. The significant result of the first Open Forum meeting was not that it led to the creation of a Black Studies program, because such a program was already under consideration. The real meaning was that the meetings led to the creation of a Citizens Advisory Council which provided a communication and liaison with the community. There were other results. Among these was that the Open Forum meeting made it clear that the community was concerned about the lack of black teachers at the college. Appointment of several black teachers within the next few years resolved some of this concern.

Student Stresses, Strains and Protests in the Late Sixties

Prairie State College students did not escape the stresses and strains that permeated college campuses throughout the country in the late 1960s, erupting into violence in some places. The Prairie State College campus movement was moderate with only one incident of violence. Students did organize, protest and share in the contribution that collegians made toward the fundamental reappraisal of American values at this time in United States history.

During the first decade at Prairie State College student concerns consisted largely of minor protests against regulations in the student lounge such as card-playing or the need to keep the lounge clean, or against parking regulations. These were local college regulations. Late in the 1960s, however, ideological differences began to surface.

There were organizations that printed "underground newspapers" in which to express their views. One was The Free Student Coalition, which objected to the moderate view of *The Prairie Statement*, holding that the college student newspaper refused "to raise needed controversy on this campus." This organization began the publication of *Void Where Prohibited* to express its views.[36] Judging from its early editions this publication took a somewhat Leftist view in pointing out that "the police are fascists and intellectually dim."[37] It supported those young men who had taken up residence in Canada. It also crusaded against the Student Government.[38]

Not surprisingly there soon appeared another organization, "The Sons of Liberty," which began publishing its views in its organ called, *A Voice From the Right*.[39] The college newspaper asserted that the organ engaged in "name calling, band-wagon sentiment, and glittering generalities.... Their articles are based on pure sentiment without facts."[40] The college student newspaper went on to score the newly-published paper. "We believe," the editorial stated, "that they are just trying to frighten everyone into thinking that the person next to you may be a Communist, trying to overthrow your school. They are also inferring that anyone who may talk against the school, or the United States, is probably a Communist. This scare campaign is all they have, because they either have no proof or do not wish their proof to become known."[41] Thus the college had at least two organizations, one expressing the Left and the other the Right point of view with the college newspaper apparently in the middle.

Besides ideological organizations and underground newspapers there was at least one underground social organization at this time. Though state law prohibited social fraternities at two-year colleges, a *Theta Gamma Tau* social organization existed briefly. Although the group was never officially recognized by the college, it sponsored numerous social events and donated an American flag which was displayed in the Learning Center.[42]

Despite these student organizations, students were far from active, at least in the estimation of the student newspaper. In an effort to stimulate interest the newspaper held a forum in the Student Lounge and invited representatives of the two underground newspapers to debate school concerns. Only one newspaper had a representative and the forum was poorly attended. Besides inattention the students in the lounge interfered with the forum through loud and distracting talk.[43]

This student apathy was the target of editorials in the student newspaper. One scored students for not attending forum meetings of the president and for poor attendance at school dances. "Yet students complain," stated the editorial, "that they do not have a voice in any administrative decision. No wonder, since they never seem to take the time to find out what is going on in the school that will concern them." The editorial went on to state, "Just what exactly are we trying to say by all this? We are attempting to instill a desire to take an active role in Prairie State."[44] If students were organizing and expressing views, they were not involved enough to satisfy the student newspaper.

This apathy soon disappeared, however, with the organization of the Black Student Union. Late in February 1969, a few weeks after the Trustees' Open Forum, this group formed to advance the interests of black students. The organization startled the student community by issuing six demands of black students and setting a deadline for compliance. The demands were a follows:

> We the Black Students feel that the demands must be met by March 15, 1969. This is ample time in our opinion. Any prolongment (sic) will be interpreted as a denial of the following demands.
>
> 1) Black History. We feel the need for Blacks to teach Afro-American courses.
>
> 2) Black Literature. We demand funds for more Black literature.
> 3) Student Government. A Black student representing the Black Student Union should be present at all student government meetings.

> 4) Black Holidays. Black holidays, honoring great Black men of America and the world should be declared so that they may gain greater acceptance in 1969.
> 5) Black Teachers. We feel the need for Black teachers to be greater in the areas of counseling, physical education, English and history.
> 6) Hiring of Black Teachers. We, the Black students of Prairie State College, feel that Calvin Savage does not meet the requirements set up by the Black Student Union.[45]

With the issuance of these demands student apathy vanished at Prairie State College. Serious concern took over. An editorial in the student newspaper sounded the anxiety. "There is an imminent threat of a Black Power take-over here," the editorial stated. "Let us first say," it continued, "that it is important and necessary for the Black students as well as all people of all nationalities to take an active interest in their heritage. However, we strongly question their motives, their demands, and the possible consequences that could arise. We are not implying that violence is inevitable, but it could happen. We believe, however, that these tactics can be harmful not only to the college, but also to the Black students' cause."[46]

Genuine concern escalated to alarm following a meeting of the Student Government when black students exchanged epithets and threats. In a report to the president, student government leaders warned "that anything could be expected and felt sure it would, if not next week the next, but for the next two weeks better expect something."[47] They reported that they expected intimidation of white students, fights, blacks invading classrooms and even possible administrative offices being invaded.[48] The atmosphere required care and scrutiny. "It is my judgment," wrote President Hostrop, "if a meaningful dialogue does not take place within a very short period of time, a major racial conflict will erupt on this campus and will extend throughout South Suburbia. This explosive situation," he continued, "must be diffused at the earliest possible moment. I cannot stress too urgently the potential crisis that exists."[49]

Violence did strike the college indirectly because of the proximity of the Tenth Street campus and Bloom Township High School located across the street where racial turmoil erupted among students. For the second day in succession conflicts between black and white students broke out and on 17 March the high school was closed when 11 students were injured and three hospitalized. Black students were pressing for more representation on the Student Council.[50]

Early in the afternoon of 19 March about one dozen black youths marched through a side entrance of Building F on the North college campus and proceeded calmly to the Student Government offices. They were seeking the college student president, holding that he had incited white students in connection with the conflict at the high school. The student president was absent but violence broke out when the group's spokesman jammed what appeared to be a gun into one student's back and at least four other students were punched and shoved. Chairs and tables were overturned and chairs were thrown through two windows. A jukebox and clock were smashed in the melee which lasted less than 10 minutes.[51]

Despite the prospects for escalating conflict and violence, the campus remained relatively cool. Within a few days the Black Studies program was approved [30 March], and there were no more incidents though tensions continued. The incident, however, was not without consequences.

Since five of the students who invaded the Student Government offices were college students there was the matter of disciplinary action. Trustees took mild disciplinary action inserting "censure" letters in their college records. Cook County sheriff's police took more positive action, however, arresting three of the students on charges of disorderly conduct. The court found the students "not guilty of criminal damage to property" charges.[52]

Of greater bearing on the college, the incident led to the complete overhaul of the Student Government. The president and seven members of the Student Senate together with two editors of the *Prairie Statement* resigned. In his resignation, the Student President stated that he had become a controversial figure on the campus and he believed that his continuance in office would be "detrimental to the college."[53] A group of white students calling themselves The Triple Alliance reacted with a parody of demands including the "canceling of classes on the birthdays of Adolph Hitler, Adolph Eichmann and Zeke Bratkowski."[54]

If racial outbreaks were confined to one incident of violence and relatively few students involved, protests attracted much more attention. These protests were of local or college origin and on national issues. Dress code regulations for women's physical education classes evoked protest at the college level. Students raised objections to the requirement for wearing dresses or skirts in coed physical education classes and succeeded in getting revisions.[55]

No issue, however, prompted more protest among college students on campuses throughout the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s than the Vietnam War. This undeclared conflict and its related incidents wrenched Prairie State College students with painful emotional experiences for many months as it did the entire American society. The Prairie State College episode paralleled the nation's moving from popular support in the early 1960s to strong opposition at the turn of the decade.

Prairie State College students shifted markedly in their attitude toward the Vietnam War between December 1968 and the Moratorium on 15 October 1969. The Free Student Coalition sought to raise funds for a Quaker hospital in South Vietnam to care for crippled children. A local radio personality was engaged to speak and students greeted him with boos.[56] Ten months later, however, announcement of the Moratorium Day received warm support. "To be against the war in Vietnam and to do nothing about it is indefensible," stated the college newspaper. "Each day hundreds of human beings are sacrificed in a war that should not be. It is up to us, the people of the United States, to make our dissent known so that this senseless slaughter may be brought to an end."[57] The administration cooperated, permitting the closing of classes and providing college facilities for the observance; and the Faculty Senate president supported the Moratorium.[58]

The National Student Mobilization Committee organized the Prairie State College Moratorium program and provided the opening speaker who delivered the most prophetic and remarkable statement of the day. He hit hard at President Nixon and his vow to ignore the Moratorium. "Nixon," he said, "will be forced to abdicate from the presidency as Johnson was. This moratorium will force it."[59] Stated three years before Watergate and five years before Nixon's withdrawal from the White House, the announcement was accurate but for the wrong reason.

The program was an all-day affair with two sessions, one during the day and one in the evening. Films and speeches comprised most of the program at both meetings. Four Vietnam War veterans presented a panel discussion. This panel emphasized the divisions of feeling. The black member criticized the prejudice with which blacks were treated in Vietnam as well as in the United States. Another Hispanic veteran with 13 months' service in Vietnam supported the United States involvement while a navy veteran extolled the United States in comparison to other nations in nationalistic terms and he foresaw a gradual United States withdrawal. About 1,500 attended the day session. More speeches comprised the evening program which closed with a candlelight memorial service and more than 200 in attendance.[60]

Reaction to the Moratorium program evoked mixed responses. One student who participated stated that "the Moratorium was really great. It's good that this school can have a program like this where people can come together and discuss their viewpoints." Another was more reserved, commenting that "I kind of have a mixed reaction to all this. If it were strictly anti-war, I could see it, but all this race jazz just makes me nervous." A third student was disgusted and stated, "It stinks. You know all these hippies are just looking to make waves. They should have never let them put on this circus ... on the campus."[61] The student newspaper was disillusioned and wrote in an editorial, "With all the explosive power of a wet firecracker and the unerring flight sense of a drunken dodo the local Vietnam War Moratorium was launched ... If the Moratorium at Prairie State is representative of the rest of the nation's, peace in Vietnam is a very bleak prospect."[62]

The Prairie State College Moratorium seemed to follow the pattern of observance throughout the nation. If the Moratorium strengthened the "dove" position on the war, it also polarized the "hawkish" position of some conservatives. The moratorium demonstrated the great divisions in American society created by the prolonged American involvement in Southeast Asia.[63]

Another issue that heightened student concerns was the unsuccessful attempt to engage Abbie Hoffman, a leader of the Youth International Party Yippies, as a campus speaker while he was on trial in Chicago on charges of conspiring to cause riots and disorder during the Democratic National Convention in 1968.[b] This issue split the faculty and became politicized with a tax referendum.

The issue came about when three student organizations, the Student Mobilization Committee, the Student League for Understanding, and the Student Senate sought approval of the Speaker Committee for a campus appearance of Hoffman in January 1969 while he was on trial. The Speaker Committee, a clearinghouse for campus speakers composed of two faculty members and a student, refused permission. An appeal to the college president was denied. The president was "concerned with the legality of Hoffman speaking at the school while he was being tried on conspiracy charges in Chicago." He indicated that after the trial was completed, the matter could be opened for further consideration.[64]

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[b] This trial, referred to as "The Chicago Conspiracy Trial," began 24 September 1969. On 18 February 1970 the jury decided that the defendants were guilty of provoking the Democratic convention disorders, but that they did not act in a widespread and planned conspiracy to do so. While on trial, Hoffman spoke on several college campuses, including Harvard, Stanford, the University of California (Berkeley), Western Michigan, and Southern Illinois University for which he received fees.

Another factor was involved. "To be honest," the president stated, "the appearance of Abbie Hoffman would have almost assured the defeat of the tax referendum." [65] The college in early March was seeking a tax rate increase for the third time in 16 months. It was feared that the appearance of Hoffman on the campus might affect the attitude of voters in the referendum since he was a controversial figure. Nick E. Zenzen, one of the two faculty members on the Speaker Committee who vetoed the request, denied that the tax referendum was a major factor. "I would have voted the way I did," he stated, "even if the referendum was not a factor. The idea of contributing to Hoffman's defense was abhorrent to me."[66]

The Social Science department entered the dispute and issued a resolution upholding freedom of speech and freedom of inquiry. "The Social Science department," the resolution stated, "supports student requests to have Abbie Hoffman speak on campus and regrets that the Speaker Committee and Dr. Hostrop did not see fit to expedite arrangements for his appearance. The department is in no way endorsing Hoffman's opinion but is convinced that the students have a right to hear what he or anyone else has to say if they so desire ... We recognize that with an upcoming tax referendum the proposed date was inconvenient. We would, however, set priority on freedom of speech over political expedience. The department urges those involved in preventing Hoffman from speaking to reconsider their actions and to assume in the future the responsibility for promoting student and academic rights."[67]

In response to the Social Science department resolution, and "biased reporting" on the part of the student newspaper, Zenzen circulated a petition among faculty members seeking support for his stand. "The students here," he stated, "are not mature enough and don't have enough background on an undergraduate level at a two-year college to know what they want ... I was asked to do a job and I did the job as I saw fit, and if this Hoffman proposal came up again I'd vote no on it again."[68] Adding to the conflict, the Black Studies department in an open letter supported the Social Science department resolution.[69]

The issue was resolved when Zenzen requested that the Faculty Senate either show support for his position or decide if he was to remain on the Speaker Committee. The Senate moved and passed a motion that he be replaced.[70] Hoffman, it was reported, was no longer available for a speaking engagement at Prairie State College.

Another stroke of violence struck the country on 4 May 1970 when four students on the campus of Kent State University in Ohio were killed and 10 wounded by National Guard troops called into service to protect the peace. The students were protesting the invasion of Cambodia. Because the incident took place on a college campus and students were the victims, the incident was felt keenly on campuses throughout the nation. Prairie State College felt the pang, too.

For at least two days Prairie State College students were stunned like those on other campuses throughout the nation. Students decided not to attend classes on 8 May in protest of the killings in an action which coincided with protests at hundreds of the nation's colleges on the same day. The day before the strike was to take place the Faculty Association met and by a margin of 29 to 21 voted to approve the strike.[71]

President Hostrop protested the killings in a letter to the President of the United States in which he urged "that no National Guardsmen be authorized on a college campus without the expressed request of the president of the particular institution faced with a difficulty."[72] But he did not approve the strike from classes, thus dividing administration from faculty and students.

On the day before the boycott against classes, tensions ran high among students. In front of Building C, four crosses were erected in testimony to the mourning for the dead students at Kent State University. Many students were distributing announcements of the strike against classes. Then scuffles broke out. Several students succeeded in tearing down the crosses in one incident. Another scuffle erupted at the flag pole where about 30 students attempted to lower the flag in memory of the Kent State victims. These students had permission from the administration to lower the flag. Meanwhile, in the Student Union, some card-playing students bitterly complained that they came to the college to learn, not to demonstrate, and they hated to see their good money wasted on a student strike. Once more, there was hardly unanimous sentiment in what action should be taken.[73]

On 8 May, a Friday, students did not attend classes, choosing instead to schedule activities of their own. The day passed quietly. The main feature of the morning program was an address in the Quadrangle. Patrick Fanning, a Flossmoor resident and a student who participated in the demonstration at Kent State, spoke to more than 200 students. With the aid of a blackboard he explained the details of the Kent episode. In moderate terms he urged peaceful demonstrations and non-violence. "Don't be part of the silent majority," he said, "demonstrate and strike peacefully, send telegrams, act, but act peacefully and non-violently."[74]

In the afternoon students returned for further discussions which focused on the inadequacy and irrelevancy of college education in the United States, particularly at Prairie State College. To correct these inadequacies an Experimental Free College was proposed. This plan was to be modeled after similar programs at several colleges around the country. The purpose of the Experimental Free College would be to provide informational classes and an opportunity for personal involvement to students in subjects not normally included in college curricula. Informal classes were proposed to deal with the problems of drug education, political action and birth control. "Instead of teaching our glorious past in history courses," it was suggested, "we should be dealing with the cold, hard facts of today's America and its repressive and genocidal tactics toward our minorities."[75]

With more insight than emotion students demonstrated a realization of what was happening to American society. An article in the student newspaper stated, "America is being torn apart on every college campus as an example of our mistakes. America," it continued, "is falling apart. There is no need for a revolution. The country is destroying itself with its corruption and hatred. We as students should not be so vain as to think that we are doing it ourselves. The powers-that-be are and they are doing a better job than our violence could ever do. We are not the vanguard. We are their facade and their targets of blame."[76]

Bringing the focus to Prairie State College, the student paper pointed the finger of scorn on the administration and the faculty. "The administration," the paper stated, "is almost invisible. The president of the college makes few appearances in front of students and then only in an official capacity." It continued, "rather than working with the students on projects such as Earth Day or the Moratorium ... the administration remains aloof and offers only token approval to such activities. With this attitude, is it any wonder that many students feel that the administration could care less what the students do?"[77]

The faculty had its share of blame. "Instead of carrying their instruction out of the classroom," the newspaper stated, "the faculty seems satisfied to disseminate whatever information they have to offer in the confines of the classroom instead of meeting students on their own ground and on their own terms. Furthermore," the article continued, "the methods of instruction at the college are antiquated. Instead of rewarding and helping students with inquisitive minds, the old high school syndrome ... prevails. Exams are mostly lessons in memorization and students find themselves losing interest in school."[78]

Thus the PSC students helped the college in several ways at this time. By their actions they hastened the consideration of minority concerns and the adoption of a Black Studies program, they accented the need for constant vigilance to protect free speech and they pointed out shortcomings in both administration and faculty procedures. Beyond the local level, they helped to dramatize the sharp divisions of American society accentuated and exacerbated by the Vietnam War, the most unpopular one in American history. Most significant, however, they demonstrated the gap between the ideals and realities of the United States.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY ALIENATE

One of Prairie State College's most urgent problems after becoming a separate institution was defining the relationships and responsibilities of the trustees, administration, faculty, staff and students. Lacking the formal constitutions of political institutions, colleges spell out these details in terms of policy. Prairie State College developed the major part of its policy between 1967 and 1969 in a process that was replete with stress and strain, especially between administration and faculty, leaving an indelible mark on the college.

Internal Governance and Faculty Participation

A rare and unusual opportunity presented itself when PSC became the 19th junior college in the Illinois junior college system. Not only was it a new college but it was a new type of college--a junior college which was not a senior college nor a secondary school. To keener minds among the faculty, this position of the junior college was clear. Thomas J. McKillip, in seeking the presidency of the Faculty Senate, addressed his colleagues and pointed this out. "The junior college," he stated, "in all aspects of its organization, is in some sort of limbo between the high school and the four-year college. It is bound to (1) remain in its present state of confusion or else (2) move downward toward high school organization and attitudes or (3) move upward toward recognition as a part of higher education. I favor the third course."[1]

As a teacher of philosophy, McKillip was quite aware of the traditional position of faculty in medieval universities. Though students were powerful in fixing tuition charges and determining the curriculum, the faculty was the controlling wheel of the university. He was also aware that the hard core of Prairie State College faculty had come from a high school environment into a college situation. He believed that the faculty should "try to arrange things so that we have a position something like that of professors in a four-year college."[2] The Faculty Senate president may not have been the official spokesman for the faculty, but he spoke for a large segment which saw itself in the mold of a four-year college or university faculty.

There were those, however, who saw the junior college as something other than the usual four-year college or university. President Hostrop presented this view. "This [junior college] governance," he wrote, "cannot be the same kind of governance as that which exists in a large university. This is not clearly understood by the faculty in that the two-year college is basically a teacher-oriented institution, whereas the university is basically a research oriented institution. Therefore, it is necessary that faculty in the two-year college understand the uniqueness of that particular institution and participate in the governance based upon the mission and the conditions inherent in such an institution."[3]

The president, however, did not object to faculty participation in formulating the college's governance. "There is strong interest," he stated, "in participating in college governance. This is commendable and certainly has its place."[4] Thus with these opposing philosophical views on the position of the junior college faculty but with the implicit agreement that the faculty should participate in governance, formulation of policy developed over nearly two years beginning in the fall of 1967.

This policy-making procedure ensued with committees representing faculty, nonacademic staff, students and administration. They considered three drafts that were presented to the trustees for approval. The top administration, however, drew up each of the three drafts which were presented to the committee for modification. This procedure minimized original faculty input. Furthermore, these drafts were based on policy manuals of other colleges rather than developing out of needs and conditions of Prairie State College.[5] Thus the faculty was consulted but did not initiate much, if any, of the policy.

A clue that the faculty was not pleased came on 7 November 1968 when the third draft of the policy manual consisting of more than 100 pages was presented to the trustees who were requested to read the entire document prior to approval at subsequent meetings. At this meeting Faculty Senate President McKillip spoke to the trustees on the faculty's point of view concerning the policies. He requested that when policies were discussed at board meetings the faculty also be allowed to express their views.[6]

As sections of policy were approved the position of department chairmen became the most controversial. The issue was whether department chairmen were administrators or faculty. In colleges and universities this is a moot question. Department chairmen do indeed carry out administrative duties. They help arrange teaching schedules of faculty in their department and meet with administrators in matters of departmental concern. They are the link and liaison with administration, especially in large colleges. Department chairmen tend to admit that they are "neither fish nor fowl." When this point was raised for policy approval, faculty concern was so strong that the issue was tabled until Cabinet and Faculty Senate could meet jointly to clarify this role.[7]

The faculty argued vehemently that chairmen were faculty positions. Raymond Lindstrand, a member of the original college faculty and chairman of the Social Science department, spoke for the faculty and argued strongly that department chairmen are not "administrators." After more than an hour of heated discussion the issue was resolved when it was agreed to add a paragraph in the policy manual that "Department chairmen are considered to be members of the faculty rather than members of the administration."[8]

The strength of faculty frustration became clear at the subsequent trustee meeting. After much discussion the trustees adopted the remaining sections of the policy in the early minutes of 20 December 1968. William E. Patton, a chemistry teacher, addressed the board and read a statement authorized by the Faculty Senate, expressing its concerns regarding the position of the board in adopting board policies. His statement was as follows:

> It has been the attitude of the faculty that we have been coming here to the board meetings on these policies to present alternatives to the view of the cabinet. The faculty representatives have suggested these alternatives to some of the provisions in the policies, with the expectation that you would consider them on their merits.
>
> Board members indicated at their last meeting that the board would prefer the president's alternatives to those of the faculty in any case. This procedure contradicts the will of the faculty and their right to serious consideration, and the will of the president of the college, resulting in a

> paradox. The members of the board will prefer the views of the president, yet the president prefers that the board consider the views of himself and of the senate on their merits, without prejudgment.
>
> If in fact this has been the board's attitude, then it places all the policies in a new light. They can be considered only the expression of the will of the board and the president, and not necessarily that of the faculty. This attitude of board members has also cut off opportunities for cooperation between faculty and administration and isolated the faculty from effective involvement in policy decisions. If we have been closed off from the school, the board has placed us in an intolerable position. We have now to embark upon a course of reentering our claim to true involvement in the school. We must do this in the name of the recognized place that faculties have always had in making and affecting institutional policies, and for the sake of the education of the students.[9]

This statement came as a surprise to most of those still attending the meeting at this small hour of the morning and to others the declaration was a shock. The president, in a press interview following the meeting, pointed out that the proposed policy had been revised several times over a six-month period as a result of conferences between faculty and administration before being submitted to the board. "If it was going to be just the president's view, or the cabinet's view," he stated, "it could have been submitted a long time ago. This is a great surprise and disappointment to me. If this is the official view of our senate, it grieves me," he added.[10]

Press interview of the faculty following the meeting reiterated the faculty frustration. When asked to list some of the key points on which the faculty had been overruled, a faculty member cited several: "The extension of the period that a faculty member may be employed before tenure must be granted from the present three years to five years. Granting the president the right to dismiss a non-tenured employee without providing a written explanation. And the classification of departmental chairmen as both faculty and administrative.[11]

Had the administration realized the depth and strength of the faculty feeling about participating in the policy-making process more care may have been taken to involve faculty to a greater extent.

When asked which was more important to them: attractive salary schedules and working conditions, or participation in governance, several faculty members stated clearly that participation was much more important. Glenn Schmitz, a senior faculty member recognized for his innovative approach to teaching, replied, "My personal opinion is that I would like to see the slightly above average salary schedule with substantial amount of participation in the policy-making. The prime reason for this is I think everybody has a stake in the institution and that way they take more interest in it, and they will work toward a common goal to make the institution work."[12]

Another senior faculty member answered the question this way. "Well, I'll quickly say ... my first question always is, let me see the salary schedule ... But I'm not willing to be a faculty member and not have my views respected and considered."[13] William E. Patton answered the same question like this: "There is no question at all that faculty involvement in government is by far the greater importance of the two. We want to get the best trained, the most intelligent, the best people we can and when we get these people you cannot hold them out of the direction and involvement in achieving goals. When you try to you are building in dissatisfaction and potential conflict."[14]

Another force bearing on the problem was the anti-Vietnam War fever and the national uprising against unresponsive authority. That is the desire for "participatory democracy" that was sweeping the country during the late '60s. The longest and most unpopular war in American history was fought in Vietnam without any formal declaration from Congress, the representatives of the people. This fact bothered many people and brought support for more participation. The administration and trustees, of course, had no control over this and could not be responsible for detecting the sentiment. Glenn Stehr, an original faculty member, perhaps stated the situation best. "In looking back," he said, "I'm not so sure we were ever all that congenial on the one hand or that strident on the other. The late sixties was a time for raising voices. This was the time when faculties were becoming ... much more vocal. It was the timing, It was a hard time all over the nation."[15]

The faculty, however, was not blameless. Some of the difficulty stemmed from a tendency toward arrogance and ambivalence on their part.

One reason for the polarization between the faculty and the administration and trustees was that the faculty acted as though only people who were currently engaged in instruction could understand the way instructors feel. They forgot or failed to realize that the administration had all been faculty at one time.

The faculty was also ambivalent. The faculty wanted more participation in institutional decision-making, but they did not aspire to be administrators. They disliked administrative work and did not want to be labeled as administrators. Administrative decisions are made in the context of committees, memorandums and persuasion that suggest a political arena. Faculty wanted to participate in decision-making but they shunned the mechanism through which decisions were made. It was impossible to have it both ways, which the faculty failed to recognize.

Thus the position of the faculty in policy-making at Prairie State College provided a rich example of the community college paradox at work. The faculty did not want the high school setting from which most of them had come; they preferred a college or university setting for a faculty but they did not want to accept the duties that a faculty must accept if it is indeed to be collegial. They were certain, however, that they wanted full participation in the direction that the college would take.

These problems remained indelible for at least a decade-and-a-half.

A Faculty Union Organizes

Few issues in the field of American education proved more controversial between 1960 and 1980 than the rise of teachers' unions. Prairie State College entered this contentious development in April 1969 when the college became the first Illinois junior college outside of Chicago to form a teachers' union, thus bringing the college into the forefront of this nationwide evolution.

Teachers' unions were nothing new when the Prairie State College teachers organized. Actually they had existed since 1916 when the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) organized. Beginning with teachers at the secondary level, the AFT always included some college teachers in its ranks but its insistence on equating teachers with that of manual workers held it back, especially at the college level. Defined primarily as an organization of school teachers, the AFT's adherents in the 1920s were mostly persons interested in "broad social issues" rather than collective bargaining. There was bitter strife between pro-Communist and liberal-socialist factions. Many had their charters revoked for "serving the interests of an external political organization."[16] By 1960 teachers' unions were more of a curiosity than an organized group concerned with collective bargaining.

During the 1960s and 1970s there was a virtual onslaught in the formation of teachers' unions and other unions in the public sector. Contributing to this rapid increase in teachers' and public sector unions was a 1959 Wisconsin law which mandated school boards and municipalities to bargain with employees.[17] Then came Executive Order Number 10988 which President John F. Kennedy issued 19 January 1962 stating that "employees of the Federal Government shall have and shall be protected in the exercise of, the right, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, to form, join and assist any employee organization or to refrain from any such activity."[18] Many states followed with public-sector legislation enhancing employee organizations.

Some states including Illinois did not provide enabling acts for teachers' unions and other private sector employee organizations. In Illinois, however, the courts established the legal basis for teachers' unions in a 1966 case involving the Chicago Teachers Union. This case held "that a municipal board of education did not require legislative authority to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with a sole collective bargaining agency selected by its teachers, and such an agreement would not be void as against public policy."[19] On the basis of this judgment, a multitude of teachers' unions formed, entered into contracts, bargained collectively and conducted strikes throughout Illinois during the 1960s and 1970s.

Elementary and secondary school teaches were first to take advantage of the new environment. The movement began in the larger systems. New York City was the first. Then unionization moved to the Chicago public schools.[20] Then when the Chicago City Colleges separated from the public schools they organized under the leadership of Norman Swenson.[21]

Three organizations served as bargaining agents for these vibrant faculties. At the junior college level, the American Federation of Teachers attracted the largest number. In 1972, 38 junior college faculties had AFT affiliation.[22] The National Education Association, however, began to give up some of its cherished emphases on appropriate professional behavior for teachers concerned with the welfare of their students and began to authorize strikes. These were first described as "refusals to work" without contracts. From these work stoppages, the NEA moved to engage in actual collective bargaining and employed the strike weapon as readily as the AFT until by the end of the 1960s the NEA was a full-fledged teachers' union.[23] A third agent was the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). This agency however, was stronger on senior college campuses and exerted little effort to win support among two-year college faculties.[24]

In this milieu, the Prairie State College faculty began to consider the prospects of organizing a faculty union early in 1969. On 6 February 1969, one week after the first Open Forum meeting stirred the community, the faculty called a meeting to discuss the issue.

The meeting was scheduled for mid-morning in Building C with the announcement that Norman Swenson, original president of the Chicago Teachers Union Local 1600, would speak. It was a dark, overcast day as the faculty gathered. Attendance was extremely high with very few full-time faculty absent. There was standing room only when the meeting convened with several senior faculty members at the front of the room. These included Raymond Lindstrand, Richard F. Peterson and Thomas J. McKillip. Cynthia Randall, a recent Radcliffe graduate and faculty appointee not yet tenured, was also among those at the front.

Swenson was introduced and began his remarks. "When I sat down to breakfast this morning," he stated, "I thought of how I was going to go out and help those poor teachers at Prairie State College." He presented a review of faculty concerns and advantages of teachers' unions in achieving faculty goals. A senior faculty member stated that in practically every instance listed, progress was being made toward these faculty goals. Another senior faculty member questioned the likely relationship between the Faculty Senate and the Union.

Considerable discussion followed. Then Raymond Lindstrand took the rostrum. As the meeting moved toward action the first senior faculty member again asked for recognition but this time was not noticed. Enrollment cards were distributed and when returns indicated that nearly two-thirds were favorable it was decided to organize as an affiliate of Cook County Teachers Union Local 1600.[25]

With the decision to form a union completed the faculty moved to gain recognition from the board as the official bargaining agent for the faculty. This was accomplished after two meetings with the trustees.

At the first meeting the faculty presented several points in connection with salary negotiations for 1969-70. There were eight items as follow: a salary structure weakened by inflation; teaching loads and assignments; health, major medical and life insurance to be paid by the college; quality of instruction in the continuing education and summer school programs; concern with the grievance procedure; liberalization of sick leave; a return to tenure status after three years rather than five years; and the quality of student and faculty facilities.[26]

Recognition came at a meeting of the trustees on 17 April 1969 after a hectic session. Early in April 1969 the trustees experienced the first sharp change in membership with the election of four new members. With 91.4 percent of the 70 full-time faculty members signing, the faculty petitioned the trustees for recognition as sole bargaining agent for the faculty.[27] Together with legal counsel the trustees went into an executive session which lasted several hours. Meanwhile, more than 25 faculty members waited in the hallway with others in a line extending down the stairway and onto the first floor.[28]

After the executive session the trustees advised the audience that the session had resulted in a "hung motion with three favoring, three opposing and one abstaining." Chairman Lester K. Kloss explained that much of the problem was due to the fact that the board included four new members and there was hesitancy on the part of these "new members to act on something of this importance without more information and without more deliberation on their part." A second executive session did not take so long. The trustees returned and with five yes votes and no negative votes, one abstention and the chairman not having to cast a vote, recognized the Cook County Teachers Union as the bargaining agent for the Prairie State College faculty.[29] Thus Prairie State College became the first Illinois junior college faculty outside Chicago to form a teachers' union. At the next meeting the trustees employed R. Theodore Clark Jr., as "special counsel" on labor relations.[30]

The next step for the faculty union was to get a contract. This took several weeks and a two-day strike, the first of many such work stoppages over the next decade-and-a-half.

When the trustees arrived for their meeting on 5 June 1969 they were greeted by 35 teachers carrying placards with such messages as "no unilateral decisions" and "pay your faculty a living wage."[31] When the trustees convened, Richard F. Peterson, leader of the picketers, stated to the board that the faculty was "participating in informational picketing to emphasize their decision with regard to several key issues concerning the college."[32] The teachers did not want the board to "act unilaterally on its budget without first reaching agreement with the union." There were two other issues of concern. One was that the 1969 summer school was a negotiable item. Another was the 1969-70 school calendar. Any unilateral decision by the board on any of these items, the union stated, would indicate bad faith bargaining.[33]

Summer school classes were scheduled to begin on 16 June. Negotiations were held throughout Sunday, and an agreement seemed near when there came the first in a series of three telegrams. The first, signed by an administrator who was directing the summer school, stated that "teachers failing to perform teaching responsibilities for summer school classes would be considered to have resigned from the summer session." This telegram was sent at about noon but many faculty did not receive it until late that evening after another telegram had been received. The second was sent about 6 P.M. This telegram stated that the first one was in error and that "the faculty schedule would be revised."[34]

Though the deadline was listed for noon on 16 June, classes were scheduled for 8 A.M. Picket lines were formed but at least one teacher met classes that morning. Television reporters interviewed the president outside his office under a grove of nearby trees. He insisted that the college was open. Technically it was, since at least one teacher had met classes, but for all intents and purposes the college was closed. A few moments after the strike deadline, a third telegram came, signed by the president, indicating that "since negotiations were continuing, teachers should disregard any previous messages as far as salaries were concerned." He stated that this telegram was seen and approved by the union. A negotiating meeting scheduled for 3 P.M. was canceled by the administrative team because of the first Prairie State College teachers' strike.[35]

On the following day, Tuesday, the strike continued while negotiations went on throughout the day. At 12:40 A.M. the next morning, Wednesday, 18 June, a settlement was reached and summer school classes resumed later that morning.[36]

Besides being the first at Prairie State College, the strike was significant for at least two other reasons. First it secured a "comprehensive collective bargaining contract for members of the Local 1600 of the Cook County College Teachers Union."[37] Prior to the strike there had been no written agreement.

The contract itself was significant. A salary schedule was established and a basis arranged for additional pay and overtime work. Other items were a class-size limitation of 30 students for most classes, a twelve-contact-hour teaching load for teachers of English, a grievance procedure, freedom from clerical duties for the faculty at registration and a group insurance plan to which the district would contribute a part.[38] These were immediate or short-term issues which could provide the basis for future negotiations.

Of greater significance was the inclusion into the original contract of the Prairie State College Policies and Procedures Manual. Inclusion of the entire Policies and Procedures Manual proved to be a constraint on the trustees in future negotiations because the faculty union argued that the only items that were negotiable in terms of the manual were those covering General Procedures and Policies Pertaining to faculty Personnel, because the remainder of the chapters in the Policies and Procedures Manual were already negotiated when the manual became a part of the original contract. In subsequent negotiations the trustees were interested in negotiating items in other chapters of the manual. Thus, negotiations were limited essentially to items in the contract itself rather than in the Policies Manual.[39]

The faculty position on the non-negotiability of the Policies Manual was paradoxical. The faculty had protested vehemently the original adoption of the Policies Manual, holding that the faculty was restricted in its contribution to that document. Once the manual was adopted into the original contract, however, the faculty declined to renegotiate items on the basis that something once negotiated should not be renegotiated. In subsequent negotiations the trustees held that their position was constrained because of this stand.

These two contradictory positions remained essential in all subsequent negotiations.

The arrival of a Prairie State College faculty union raises several questions. Obviously the first query is: Why did the college faculty form a union in the first place and thus become the first college in Illinois outside Chicago to organize a collective bargaining unit? Perhaps there are many explanations but at least two seem quite clear. First is a feeling of insecurity on the part of the faculty as a whole. Several factors contributed to this feeling of insecurity.

One was that the two top administrators were new appointees having come from California and Utah respectively. Though there was no direct personal animosity toward these administrators, the attempts of these people to advance innovative instruction was accepted with reservations on the part of the faculty. The dismissal of two teachers without clear statements of charges and the changing of tenure procedures was another factor seen on the part of the faculty as a threat to their status.

The adoption of a policy manual without more faculty participation was a strong factor in creating a feeling of insecurity on the part of the faculty. This tended to make the faculty feel left out of the college. "We don't want to run the school," stated Richard F. Peterson, the original president of the teachers' union. "All we want is to be able to share in the destiny and policies of our college."[40] Other faculty members echoed this view. The faculty felt alienated and uninvolved. They felt they could not communicate with the administration. This led to alienation and a feeling of frustration.

Another aspect was the struggle on the part of the faculty for faculty power and the development of a collegial structure as the college became more established as a community college.

How the Prairie State College faculty organized their union is a second question. A small group of faculty leaders provided the stimulus for the original union organization. These were mainly senior and tenured-faculty members supported by a few junior members not on tenure. Tenured and senior faculty could better face the risk of job security in light of anti-union feeling.

For their bargaining unit the Prairie State College faculty had at least three choices. First, there was the American Association of University Professors. This organization, however, was not firmly established on two-year college campuses, and on senior college campuses it was not a substantial force in forming unions. Next there was the Illinois Education Association, that in 1969 had not yet become a strong force in faculty union formation. "I think that many of us thought of it as an administrative dominated organization which it was at the time and we were primarily interested in an organization for teachers," said one faculty member. "We wanted an organization that was dominated by a teachers' organization rather than a combined organization."[41]

Then there was the American Federation of Teachers, chosen by Prairie State College as the bargaining agent. This agency impressed the faculty in the "Townsend Affair." Though the college did not yet have a union, Townsend had joined the Chicago City College Union in his position at Wilson, and the union brought pressure on the Prairie State College trustees in his behalf. This did not go unnoticed on the part of the Prairie State faculty. "As I see it, and I think most faculty would agree," said one senior faculty member, "when you think of unionizing you think of the most militant, and the AFT was the most militant and seemed to get the most results. The IEA was more of an administrative union and the AAUP was the most moderate of all, dealing more with academic standards and academic freedom."[42] This reasoning led the faculty to choose the American Federation of Teachers as its bargaining unit.

Having decided on the AFT as the bargaining unit, the question remained whether to begin a separate chapter or to join with the cook County College Teachers Union, Local 1600, which was affiliated with the American Teachers Union, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Another faculty member explains the choice: "The function of a union, the basic idea of a union is that through union there is strength, the strength of numbers....First of all you need some expertise in the organizing process....When we first organized, while initially we did have the internal group that was cohesive, we felt the numbers were small and certainly we had no money, and we were stepping into an unknown that we felt uncomfortable with. So therefore, we went to 1600 and they provided expertise because they had long been a union."[43]

Another moot question arises from the organization of the Prairie State College faculty union. That is, was a faculty union inevitable in 1969? Trustees, administrators and faculty of the college at the time seem to agree that it was probably inevitable given the circumstances. "I really think," said one faculty member, "that avoiding unionization was a 50 to 50 chance."[44] An administrator at the time, however, believes that "conditions at Prairie State College in 1968 and 1969 made unionization almost inevitable." He continued, "There was a solid, small nucleus of faculty strongly motivated to go the route of unionization. And Norman Swenson of the Chicago AFT union recruited and stood behind this nucleus."[45] Two trustees who were involved tend to agree with the administrator. "I think," she stated "unionization was inevitable. Any steps would only have delayed it."[46] Another trustee concurred. "I think," he said, "that faculty unionization probably was inevitable."[47]

Whether or not it was inevitable, a faculty union did indeed come to Prairie State College in 1969 and became a strong force in the life of the college for the next decade-and-a-half.

CHAPTER TWELVE

ALIENATION INCREASES AND A PRESIDENT IS TERMINATED

A prominent issue on college campuses during the late 1960s was the inclusion of Afro-American or Black Studies programs into the curriculum. This tension was entwined with the Civil Rights movement which permeated the decade. The issue was not so much whether Afro-American studies should be installed into college curriculums but how such programs would be organized and administered. This problem involved all parts of Prairie State College and ultimately contributed to the termination of its president, Dr. Richard W. Hostrop.

A Spring of Discontent

Throughout the spring of 1970 rifts within the college grew. These differences were between students and administration; students and trustees; faculty and trustees; faculty and administration; faculty and faculty; and administration and trustees. For several months these divergences grew sharper, culminating in an all-night trustee meeting which left the college and community frustrated.

Divisions, protests and conflicts between students and administration and governing bodies of colleges have existed since the origin of colleges. This is a fact of life on any college campus. Students, however, are seldom completely united except on an occasional issue. Various student organizations exist on most campuses. One of these groups at Prairie State College during the late 1960s and early 1970s was the Black Student Union which was perhaps the most vocal and organized of any student group. This organization formed about the time the Black Studies program was adopted in March 1969, and its main purpose was to serve the concerns and cause of black students at the college.

Adoption of the Black Studies program helped to increase federal funds for the college in connection with provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352). The college established a Financial Aids and Placement Office and appointed Calvin Savage, a black American and clinical psychologist, to administer the funding. This administrator and the office had three objectives: first, to organize and administer the federally-financed College Work-Study Program, Educational Opportunity Grant Program and the Law Enforcement Educational Program; second, to establish an active placement service for students in part-time jobs and career jobs for graduates; and third, to distribute information about academic scholarships, grants and other financial assistance available to all students.[1]

After several months in office, Savage became the chief target for protests of the Black Student Union. "He is," they claimed, "an Uncle Tom Negro ... hired to administer financial aid against black students and for white students."[2] The black students further stated that "we feel that the Office of Financial Aids, and the assistant dean of that office have been using the money--taxpayers' money--to harass and intimidate the black students, and furthermore, to keep down the enrollment of black students."[3]

The Black Student Union had other grievances which they took to a trustee meeting. These included the need for more black students and greater support for the Black Studies program. Black Student Union President, Melvin Pickett, addressed the board, reciting questions and demanding answers in response to each item. Doris Hill, vice chairman of the board, refused to submit the board to the questioning and promised written answers which were forwarded a few days later. The Black Student Union students were obviously annoyed and accused her of being "a racist white."[4] They departed from the meeting, reaffirming their threat to oppose the college's pending tax referendum.

Refutation of the Black Student Union charges came from the college president who pointed out that enrollment of black students at the college was roughly proportionate to the total non-white population of the district; that is, about 8 percent; yet black students received much more than 8 percent of all financial aid for students. Furthermore, black student registrations were roughly proportionate to the total non-white population of the district and black student registrations were rising at approximately double the rate of white students. Also, 8 percent of the faculty was black, 10 percent of the administrative staff was black, 15 percent of the clerical staff was black and 20 percent of the maintenance staff was black.[5]

Though she was not presenting an official position of the board, a trustee wrote a memo to the Black Student Union expressing a view shared by many. "You have almost completely alienated me," she stated, "by your whip-saw tactics of unreasonable demands on one side and your efforts to defeat the referendum on the other. The black community," she continued, "has received just and equitable consideration from this college. The racial bigotry practiced by some blacks on this campus is well known to the college community. Many choose to ignore this practice because it is popular today in some circles to permit any kind of behavior from a black person because he is black, to grant any demand because black makes it right. I cannot nor will I be that condescending .... When you fail to support and actually work to defeat the needed revenues that will provide more opportunities for more students, you are denying yourself and your brothers and sisters the chance to become the educators, the businessmen, the professionals of tomorrow."[6]

A few weeks later the Black Student Union decided they needed more than one adviser when William Townsend, their original adviser and around whose *cause celebre* they had rallied, submitted his resignation. "I conceive," Townsend wrote, "that in striving to give sincere guidance you currently define my efforts as inadequate. As of this date I am asking you to accept my resignation." Two advisers were sought as replacements.[7]

Besides strains between students and trustees, especially black students, relations between the faculty itself became more tenuous in the first few months of the 1970s. The persistence of the black movement contributed to this. Along with establishment of the Black Studies program, there arose among the faculty the suggestion that a Human Relations Committee be formed to enhance racial relations at this tense time.

Reservations arose about this committee. "I have reluctantly reached the conclusion," stated a senior faculty member, "that a Human Relations Committee ... is not practicable at this time, nor in the near future. The nature of the Black Movement (as I understand it) in this year and probably for some years to come," he continued, "is such as to place an overriding emphasis upon unity and loyalty. With such an emphasis I can understand that the black leadership and its dedicated following does and will tend to look with suspicion on any outside, biracial agency as a potentially divisive influence. They would be willing to work through such a committee as that proposed only insofar as it might further the preestablished aims of the Black Movement."[8] Thus there was a realization among some faculty that the aims and goals of the Black Movement and those of the faculty were not identical or compatible.

There were other divisions within the faculty. Stated another way, there was unity against the prospect of creating disunity. In the original Policy and Procedures manual there was a section providing for a Faculty Member of the Year Award. The faculty objected to this award.[9] The difficulty was in establishing criteria for the award and the likelihood of acrimony that the award might create among faculty brought about by such an election. "Because there are many fine teachers at Prairie State College," said a senior faculty member, "I oppose the idea of choosing the instructor of the year on the basis of teaching which is an impossible thing to do. "I think," she continued, "it can lead to bitterness on who got it and why."[10]

As a whole, however, the main concern of the faculty in the early months of 1970 was its relations with the trustees representing the college district in obtaining a contract with the teachers' union for employment in 1970-71. The original contract obtained in June 1969 was nearing expiration with the end of the first semester in June 1970. The issues were essentially economic, including the basic salary schedule, faculty overload, summer school compensation and fringe benefits. Negotiations began in February but after 19 sessions none of the essential issues had been considered late in May.[11] Tension among the faculty was mounting day by day.

Discontent also developed between the administration and trustees during the early part of 1970.

Always an issue of strain, the budget became an increasing concern because of the rising costs and constraints of income, or simply, inflation. The budget became a source of friction.[12] Furthermore, other information was withheld from the trustees that the board felt should have been brought to their attention.[13]

From the president's point of view, the issue lay in distinguishing the fine line between policymaking, a trustee responsibility, and the means of carrying out the policy, an administrative responsibility. "Many questions which are asked of the administration by the board members," he wrote, "are questions of process rather than questions which lead to a policymaking or financial decision. "In short," he continued, "the questions asked all too often are questioning the means toward an end which in effect is dictating the administrative process toward reaching those ends."[14] The effective operation of a college rests on the clear understanding of this distinction on the part of the trustees and the president. It is apparent that on this critical issue there was some misunderstanding.

Further problems included instability of the trustees as a whole. Between 1967 and 1971 a total of 19 different people served on the Board of Trustees. Most were elected while a few were appointed to serve unexpired terms. The pressure related to the various special problems associated with the college together with the national tensions of the late 1960s.

Not only did stresses and strains lead to instability among boards but these strains brought forth many attacks on and dismissals of college presidents throughout the country. When it became apparent in the April trustee elections that candidates were running for trustee positions because they were dissatisfied with the president, the incumbent chief executive was compelled to seek a vote of confidence from the board prior to the election.[15] The trustees complied with this request and by a unanimous vote extended the president's contract for two years with an increase in salary.[16]

In the midst of this atmosphere of strained relations between the trustees and administration, two controversial administrative decisions further exacerbated the tensions.

The campus was thrown into turmoil for at least three months between April and July 1970.

The first of these resolutions was the unilateral action of the president to establish a Storefront Academy in conjunction with the Jones Memorial Community Center in March 1970. Opened several evenings during the week, the purpose of the academy was two-fold. First, it was designed to provide a place where students in the underprivileged area of the community could gather, read and discuss mutual problems. The storefront was expected to help "better understand the needs of our students who reside on the east side of Chicago Heights and in East Chicago Heights.[17] A college student served as director and was jointly responsible to the college and to the Jones Center.

The board objected strenuously to the way it had been created without board advisement and approval. The program had been in operation for more than a month before it came to the board's attention.[a] The main concern of the board was "why something of this nature which they considered the beginning of a program was not brought to the board at the time it was being considered."[18] To establish a Storefront Academy off-campus represented a major change in emphasis from the college's standpoint. Furthermore, the expected life of the project with the ensuing cost would exceed the limits to which the board had authorized the president to go on his own initiative.[19]

A second administrative stroke which sent greater disturbing waves across the campus and throughout the community was a tentative and exploratory proposal of the president to integrate the Black Studies program with the rest of the curriculum of the college. Compounding the action was the manner in which the proposal was unilaterally presented at an Administrative Cabinet meeting in the form of a confidential position paper which was subsequently divulged.

The fundamental issue in the adoption of Black Studies programs on college campuses across the country in the late 1960s was not that the programs should be adopted but how should the programs be implemented. Generally, implementation took two forms: First, some colleges created a separate department and program. Second, others created a "program" with a full-time staff but drawing faculty members from other departments.[20] Prairie State College followed the first plan, creating a separate program to be established for a two-year trial period.

After a year of observing the strengths and weaknesses of the Black Studies program at the college the president presented a memorandum to the Administrative Cabinet on 25 May 1970 to consider "integrating the Black Studies program with the rest of the curricula of the school"[21] This "position paper" was to be "very confidential."[22]

The position paper made two suggestions, neither shocking nor revolutionary in view of the methods of implementing black studies programs in colleges throughout the country. "It is proposed," the president stated in the memo, "that rather than move toward an Ethnic Studies department that relevant programs be integrated into existing academic departments."[23] He continued, "The Director of Ethnic Studies would be responsible for serving as a resource person to the entire academic staff. He would advise how each course and department within the college could be made more relevant to the needs of all students. He would suggest content, literature sources and experiences to facilitate learning. He would suggest additional courses needed."[24]

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[a] John Hill, leader in the Boy Scout organization in the community and the husband of board member Doris Hill, was attending a scout meeting at the Jones Memorial when the Store Front Academy came to his attention. When he related this information to his wife it was the first notice the trustees had of the academy's operation.

Granted, the proposal was inherently and philosophically defensible. There was nothing revolutionary in the proposals. Its recommendations were being implemented in many Black Studies programs throughout the country. But the proposal proved to be a mistake for at least two reasons.

First was the confidentiality of the memo. Asking a group of several people to maintain secrecy on an issue as volatile as black studies at this time was asking for trouble. Trouble came quickly. The entire contents of the memo became common knowledge among the faculty within a few days. On 10 June the Black Studies director brought a copy to a faculty meeting called to discuss contract negotiations. The meeting was promptly turned over to him. After his comments the group approved a resolution which read: "The faculty totally rejects any unilateral decision affecting departments under programs in the college and urges that the Ethnic Studies program be allowed to run its full two-year course before an evaluation of the program be made."[25] The teachers' union president, faculty senate president, American Association of University Professors president and all department chairmen signed the resolution.[26]

The sharpest reaction came from the Black Studies Director. "Consistent with his Nixonian-like tactics of saying one thing and doing another," he stated, "he (the college president) would scheme to undermine and destroy the Black Studies program which has been one of the most positive forces on the campus all year."[27] He continued to score the president for other discrepancies with the program stating that, "most recently he attempted to wait until the faculty dispersed in order to pull a *coup d'etat* by disbanding the Ethnic Studies program, depriving the program of all funds and reducing the director to house niger status."[28]

Reaction to the confidential memorandum spread rapidly beyond the campus to the immediate community and throughout the state. "We were dismayed at the news," stated the co-director of the Education Services Department, "the possible dissolution or diminution of Prairie State's Ethnic Studies program is of major concern to the Education Department of the Illinois Commission on Human Relations."[29] The Director of Black Studies at Chicago State College telegraphed the president that "your recent ... proposed Ethnic Studies program for the 1970-71 academic year ... has been interpreted by concerned black people as an underhanded assault designed to dilute relevancy of the Black Studies program and a clear attempt to co-opt the drive initiated by black students, the black community."[30]

The second mistake was the manner in which the memorandum was produced and the timing. The memorandum came forth without any communication with the trustees. The first notice of the memo reached the trustees while they were preparing to participate in the 11th commencement services, held at the Homewood-Flossmoor High School auditorium on the evening of 12 June.[b] Board members were aghast at the information albeit they had heard rumors of such a memo.[31]

The Board of Trustees was shocked at the memo for at least two reasons: First, the document carried implications of policy which they had never considered. This was a clear impingement on trustee responsibilities. Second, the memo placed them in an embarrassing position with the black minority in the community because it implied that the board was reneging on a commitment. When the Black Studies program was adopted in March 1969, it was clearly stated that the program would be continued "for a test period of two years in its then established format, and that with the exception of budgetary limitations ... the board would not discontinue the program during that two-year period."[32]

To assure the black community that the trustees had nothing to do with the memo and had no intention of modifying the Black Studies program, Trustee Chairman Lester K. Kloss wrote the director of the Black Studies program, "I want to take this additional means to assure you that no changes in the present concept or operation of your program are now under consideration by either the administration or the Board of Trustees."[33]

The eve of commencement thus found the campus tense with uncertainty. Discontent had grown to resentment. Two days before commencement the union president had stated that faculty members were demanding the resignation of the president.[34] Without a contract, the teachers' union called a strike and summer school did not open as scheduled on 15 June. For a week the college writhed.

The college had experienced a two-day strike in June 1969 but this one was uglier. Though there was no physical violence there was much harassment of administration and trustees. Trustee Chairman Lester K. Kloss and the president were principal targets of telephone calls throughout the night. Typical were unwanted deliveries of pizzas, unordered calls for taxicabs and unnecessary service calls for gasoline station emergency cars. An undertaker was even summoned for a deceased person who was not deceased. Sympathy calls for the striking faculty came from factory employees throughout the community.[35] The campaign was well orchestrated, but harassing and insolent to the recipients and did nothing to build goodwill in a stressful time.

Students joined the faculty on picket lines. The campus of Prairie State College was indeed in disarray when the trustees gathered for their regular meeting on 18 June, an historic all-night gathering that would last for 10 hours, in which the falling apart would come together in a tumultuous session.

When the board members arrived for the meeting in Building J, 50 students were crowded into the room. Chairs had to be obtained for the trustees. A motion to move the meeting to a larger room failed but the background of shouting and chanting from students overflowing the hall and into the campus was so loud that the meeting was moved to the assembly room in Building K.[36]

When the board reconvened, the setting was imposing. The board sat at the bottom and front of the large assembly room while stretching upward in a large semi-circle sat an audience of several hundred students, faculty and aroused citizens of the community. Doris Hill, the vice chairman who presided at the meeting in the absence of Chairman Lester K. Kloss, describes the setting. "Very frankly," she stated, "I felt like the Christians before the lions and they were turning thumbs down. The role I had to play," she continued, "was to keep order and to listen and to answer where possible and to answer the same question again and again because many of the people did not like the answer we had to give them, particularly on the budget."[37]

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[b] During most of the years, after the college vacated the facilities on Tenth Street in Chicago Heights and before completion of the main building, it was the practice to hold commencement services at one of the high schools in the college district.

The resumed session began with items from the floor. The Student Strike Committee president read a letter protesting "a state of stagnation" on the campus due to the indecisiveness of the trustees and lack of interest or courage by the president according to the letter.[38] Reaction to this letter was a slight murmur among the audience. A second letter, however, evoked a demonstration when the same student read a letter addressed to the trustee chairman requesting "the immediate dismissal of the college president."[39] There were several reasons. These included two strikes in two years; the "confidential" memo on the Black Studies; chronic waste of time, money and talent; a seemingly threatening anarchy due to the lack of communication between the president and the student body; and poor administration policies leading to a poor psychological climate on the campus.[40]

The focus then turned to the "confidential" memo which President Hostrop said had been obtained illegally by the college newspaper. Hill insisted, "I know of no such memo. No memo or recommendation has been brought before this board."[41] The student turned to the president who declined to discuss the paper and protested that "what you are trying to do here is a kangaroo court."[42]

Discussion on the budget ensued. This brought the only silent hearing of the evening when Trustee Griffith explained the board's lack of funds. He detailed the restricted funds in three areas of funding--student tuition, state funds and local property taxes. He pointed out that the board was not prepared to seek an additional increase in student tuition at that time and that the legislature had bottled up an increase in state aid "in committee." He emphasized strongly the "mood of the community" against further raises in taxes, citing three defeats in tax referendums.[43]

After more than four hours of items from the floor the board turned to other business, unfinished and new. The audience began to dwindle but board business remained and the trustees continued to confront their responsibilities. Besides the usual approval of bills, the board went into an executive session at 1:30 a.m. and decided to continue the appointment of Calvin Savage. In a second executive session between 3:30 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. the board decided to stand firm on its last salary offer to the faculty.[44] With only three board members remaining and 10 hours later, the trustees adjourned at 5:30 a.m.[45] Weary and worn they departed, some of them directly to professional positions awaiting them in a few hours.

With the strike still on, the beleaguered campus remained relatively calm the next day as if drained by the all-night session. Perhaps it was not all bad. At least all the frustrations were released. Very little was left unsaid. But the college was at a low point. Morale was dismal.

Hopes were revived somewhat two days later. The day after the all-night session a state representative served as chairman to get strike negotiations underway. Then Trustee Chairman Kloss suggested federal mediation to get the discussions off dead center to which both sides agreed. Thus the college set another precedent. This was the first time in Illinois that mediation was utilized between a college board and a teachers' union.[46]

Classes resumed on 22 June, one week late, but the summer school session was not lost while negotiations continued with a federal negotiator. The college limped along--uncertain, divided and with downcast spirit as if waiting for another blow to strike. Within a few weeks this came.

A President is Terminated

The efficient operation of a college requires compatibility of various parts of the institution. When these various parts including the trustees, administration, faculty, students and supportive staff fail to accommodate each other the institution is hindered. The relationship between trustees and administration is most essential. Since higher education trustees are an on-going group that holds the college in trust for the community, when relations between the trustees and the chief administrator break down completely the solution is usually a change in presidents. Such a breakdown in relations came to Prairie State College in July 1970 and the issue was resolved by terminating the president.

There was no single issue precipitating the dismissal of the Prairie State College head.

Chairman Lester K. Kloss made this point clear in a public announcement. "If the public is looking for a single sensational issue," he stated, "I can't manufacture one. There was a series of situations of about equal importance ... a dozen or 15 specific areas" in which the board had lost confidence in the president's performance of his duties.[47]

For nearly a year before termination, the relationship between the trustees and the chief administrator worsened. Communication began to deteriorate in September 1969, surfacing in the budgeting process.[48] In drawing up a budget the usual procedure is for the administration to present a budget based on as much information as possible. This data is made available to the trustees for consideration prior to final approval. Trustees expressed the view for some time that the administration did not comply with some of their requests for pertinent financial information relative to budget matters. "The administration," stated one trustee, "presented the budget and that was the way it would be and expected agreement by the trustees."[49]

During April 1970, however, actions and developments surfaced to accelerate this deterioration in the relationship between the trustees and the president. The extension of the president's contract evoked problems. The trustees did not object to the extension of the contract. As a matter of fact, the board voted unanimously for a continuance but there were conditions. These provisions related to the president's involvement in the writing and editing of books. Two of his books were nearing publication and he drew the attention of the board and others to this development with understandable pride.[50]

The board understood and accepted the premise that there is no incompatibility with a chief administrator writing and publishing. This activity can indeed bring prestige to the institution with which he is affiliated as well as himself. The board did, however, feel strongly that in view of the pressing problems involving the college during the spring of 1970 that the president should curtail his writing and publishing activities because they tended to take time from his administrative responsibilities which were becoming more demanding at that time. Thus the board insisted that the contract include a provision that the president "promised to devote full time to his duties" as president of Prairie State College.[51] Much to their consternation, however, the board learned at a subsequent meeting that the contract which the board signed included no provision pertaining to the full-time duties of the president. This provision had been "surreptitiously deleted."[52] In the eyes of the trustees such an act hardly strengthened their confidence in the college chief executive.

Another matter which raised doubts in the minds of the trustees involved the hiring of an architect for the Dental Building in April 1970. This came about when R. Alden Jones and the newly-formed firm which he joined, rather than Perkins and Will, the original architects appointed to build the permanent campus, received the contract to construct the Dental Building. Jones had served as supervisor of the interim campus construction for Perkins and Will and he had designed Building K, the first structure of the permanent campus. Early in 1970, however, he left Perkins and Will and joined in the founding of another architectural company. Meanwhile, when a misunderstanding arose between Perkins and Will and the Prairie State College administration over whether the Dental Building was to be included as a part of the permanent campus or a separate project, Jones's firm was awarded the architectural contract for the Dental Building. Though the Dental Building when completed blended into the permanent campus pattern as if designed by the same architect, the matter embarrassed the trustees and Perkins and Will.[53]

About this time came revelation of the Store Front Academy and a month later came divulgence of the "confidential" memorandum on the Black Studies, all compounding the doubt and further increasing the lack of confidence of the trustees in the president. The "all-night" session of 18 June, during which surfaced all the frustrations, stresses and strains that had been wrenching the college for months, provided the climax. As events and revelations occurred in the weeks thereafter, the trustees considered terminating the president. The chairman was delegated to advise the president.

On 20 June at an informal six-hour meeting held in the home of the trustee chairman, the president was advised of the board's position. The problems and reasons for lack of confidence were explained. "He just would not accept the fact that he had any problems," stated the chairman. "And at that point the rest of the board virtually took it out of my hands and decided to take action."[54]

A second meeting was held on 13 July in the office of the special counsel retained by the trustees, with President Hostrop and Chairman Kloss attending. Again at this time, "I made it clear," stated Kloss, "that Dr. Hostrop was not facing up to and solving the problems that were developing. There was no bombshell. Things simply never got any better." He continued, "We were forced into a position of offering the president a chance to resign, or of facing the alternative of being fired, we told him. When Dr. Hostrop declined to resign, we were left with no alternative but to terminate his contract."[55]

On 23 July the trustees scheduled a hearing for President Hostrop at a special board meeting. Upon advice of his counsel, however, the president did not attend this meeting.[56] Upon convening, the board immediately went into executive session for 90 minutes during which time they conferred with two absent members. Following the executive session the board in open session read the motion: "For reasons that have already been discussed with Dr. Hostrop, the best interests of the college require that his employment be terminated, and that he shall be relieved of his duties as president of Illinois Junior College District 515. The termination shall be effective immediately." The vote was unanimous and both absent members had requested that their votes be recorded as "aye." The board adjourned immediately.[57]

Thus was concluded an administrative era which spanned slightly more than three years. With all the external forces bearing upon the institution combined with internal problems involved with the early years of an independent community college this may well have been the most difficult period during the first quarter-century in the life of the college. The Civil Rights Movement and the reaction to the Vietnam War, America's longest and most unpopular war, which swept the nation during the late 1960s was felt especially on college campuses.

But Prairie State College was a young institution without long traditions on which to draw in these strenuous times. Compounding and adding to these forces abroad were local problems such as trying to finance a growing institution against the financial constraints of inflation; attempting to gain title to and purchase the site for a permanent campus; and getting that site annexed into a municipality. Despite these problems the college advanced. A new name and image were born. Programs were added and enlarged especially in the area of occupational and technical training. And enrollment grew by more than 300 percent. Perhaps there was a president somewhere who might have survived. This one, however, did not.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

NEW LEADERSHIP AND REAPPRAISAL

In July 1970 Prairie State College found itself at the lowest point in its brief history. The institution was in disarray. It was without a leader, all branches of the college, including trustees, administration, faculty and students were at odds with each other, and the campus reeked with depression. About the only step backward remaining would be to close down the place completely. This dismal prospect was a possibility in the minds of more than a few. At this low point, however, the college found new leadership, stepped back, took a serious look at itself and began a slow, difficult road.

The Nadir of a Community College

In the history of institutions there come times when low points are reached. Problems accumulate to the extent that the institution finds it difficult to hold its own much less move forward. Prairie State College reached this point between July 1970 and June 1971. Besides the persistent and perennial issue of financing, strained personal relations between groups within the college became more intense.

The most critical problem confronting the college on the morning of 24 July 1970 was the need for a chief executive. A replacement was found in less than a week from within the ranks of the college. This was Ashley L. Johnson who for the past year had been serving as vice president for instructional services. On 27 July following a meeting of the trustees together with representatives of the Teachers' Union, the Faculty Senate, the faculty representative of the American Association of University Professors and members of the administration, Johnson's appointment was announced at a press conference.[1] "His selection," stated Trustee Chairman Lester K. Kloss, "seemed very logical to the board in view of his varied activities during the past five years, and the scope of his experience." He continued, "I think an additional factor is the high regard in which he is held by the faculty. Obviously, faculty and administration relationships are something about which we are concerned."[2]

The new president did, indeed, have the confidence and support of the faculty. Three weeks before his appointment as president, the faculty organizations presented the trustees with a resolution which cited Johnson for his "outstanding contributions to the college as active vice president for instruction."[3] Thus in announcing Johnson's appointment to the acting chief executive post the trustee chairman gave him a "fighting chance" to become the "permanent president" of the institution. "Mr. Johnson's appointment as acting president," the chairman stated, "does not necessarily guarantee his selection as permanent executive of the college nor does it disqualify him."[4]

Johnson did bring strong qualifications to the acting presidency. Born in Gary, Ind., in 1926, he was a native of the south suburban region. As a child he moved with his parents to Chicago where he attended grade school and graduated from high school. Following service in the air force during World War II he returned to Chicago for a semester at Wilson Junior College. He enrolled in Valparaiso University where he received his bachelor's degree before entering Indiana University from which he received his master's degree. After several years of teaching at Portage, Ind., and Benton Harbor, Mich., high schools he joined the Bloom Township High School faculty in 1958. After two years of employment with a steel company he returned to Bloom and joined Bloom Community College in 1967 as coordinator of adult education. He became dean of continuing education in 1968 and vice president for instructional services in 1969.[5]

The new president was aware that his job would not be easy. He was concerned, humble and aware of the need for help from many people. Upon his appointment he stated his feelings: "I was greatly concerned that the college had...reached its lowest point in morale and general conditions....When I was asked if I would consider moving into that position...I felt greatly honored that I had been called upon to step into a situation which I knew was not going to be an easy one. I knew we were going to have tremendous challenges. But at the same time having served in various capacities (at the institution) I felt optimistic about the changes that could be made to...(meet) expectations of people within the district and within the community college system...of Illinois.

"I think another factor was that the community college was an important institution and up to that time had provided excellent services for countless people...I felt...the obligation...to bring that institution back up to that positive level...I felt assured of the result...going into a project...with many other people whom I knew had the commitment and would give the time and energy needed."[6]

First and foremost of the many college difficulties was funding the institution. That this is a common problem with all colleges did not reduce its seriousness for Prairie State. From 1968 through 1970 the college deficit had increased steadily until it approached $1 million.[7] In view of such deficit-financing, budgeting became extremely difficult. There was conflict among various segments of the college each striving for their share of the economic pie. Even with ample funds this process can be exasperating, but with deficits it becomes downright exacerbating.

The most perplexing problem was bringing in a budget that would stem the tide of deficit-financing which had plagued the college for the last two years. Demands from at least two segments of the college community added to the difficulty. First was the settlement with the Faculty Union which called for an increased expenditure over the previous year of more than $100,000 including salary increases and other benefits for the 1970-71 school year.[8] A month after becoming the first junior college in the country to adopt federal mediation and two weeks before the new president assumed office an agreement was reached with a settlement signed late in August. Besides salary increases other "gains" in the settlement were maternity and personal leave provisions, added sick leave and college contributions toward hospitalization, medical insurance and life insurance.[9]

Another critical concern related to the amount of funds that should be appropriated for the Black Studies program for 1970-71. From the program's implementation in the fall semester of 1969 a running battle ensued between the program director and the trustees over funds. This issue dominated trustee meetings during the summer of 1970. The problem became so emotional that it became difficult to divorce the goals and real needs of the Black Studies program from the dynamic advocacy of the director, Benjamin G. Cooke.[a] This intransigent stance, however, was not unusual according to W. L. O"Neill who writes that "Black demands were twice as likely to be granted as other kinds. And, as a rule, the more violent a protest the more likely it was to succeed."[10]

Simmering throughout the summer, the drive for funding the Black Studies program reached its peak in September 1970. At this time the trustees overruled the recommendation of its budget committee for an appropriation of $36,439 and approved a sum of $64,805 in an annual budget that provided operating funds of $3,142,112.[11]

Prospects of deficit-financing and the bearing that the union agreement and the Black Studies budget appropriation would have on the budget raised concern in the college community. At least one trustee resigned over the issue of fiscal responsibility at the meeting which approved the Black Studies appropriation.[12]

The Black Studies allotment raised the most furor but the issue did not fall completely along racial lines. A number of black leaders communicated their feelings that they supported the ethnic program in principle but they did not necessarily support the full-budget requests of the Black Studies director. They expressed concern that the emphasis on requests for the Black Studies would detract from adequate support for the Child Development, Nurses-Aid and Basic Education programs which also attracted black students.[13]

The Faculty Teachers Union blamed the deficit financing on the incompetency of the trustees. "I will request," wrote one union president, "that our chapter support your program in its legitimate demands for a fair share of the budget at Prairie State College." He continued, "I believe the board is grossly exaggerating the lack of available funds and that it is attempting to use the union as a scapegoat to conceal its own incompetency and inefficiency in raising funds for your program and for the college."[14]

No matter where the responsibility for deficit-financing rested, the style of the Black Studies director hardly worked toward unity. If anything, it brought more trouble to already troubled waters. There were also increasing tensions between other groups.

There were growing strains between the trustees and the faculty. The extent of this discord surfaced during ratification sessions between the board and union on the agreement during August 1970. Raymond Lindstrand, president of the teachers' union, was "stunned" by the trustees' hostility and moved to express his surprise in a letter to the president. "It is necessary," he wrote, "for me to make a response to what I consider the slanderous attacks made upon the faculty, the union leadership, and me personally at last night's board meeting. I was stunned by what was said and what appeared to me to be an implacable and deep-seated hostility of the board toward the faculty."[15]

Whether the union agreement of August 1970 placed a financial burden on the college district is perhaps a moot issue. Doubtless the financial factor had a bearing on the board's demeanor. But what may have escaped the Faculty Union members was the extent of the harassment which board members experienced during the June strike. "It was just unbelievable," stated one trustee. "I happen in my business life to work with the Teamsters' Union and the teamsters are gentlemen along side of some of the harassing actions that were directed toward me and my family during that initial strike."[16] There were nasty telephone calls during the middle of the night, unwanted deliveries of pizzas and unordered calls for taxicabs. And an undertaker was even summoned for a non-deceased person. Such actions hardly make for warm and friendly relations and these memories were still fresh in the minds of many trustees while the contract was being ratified.

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[a] Dealing with the director of the Black Studies program was the most difficult problem Johnson faced as president. "I think," Johnson stated, "the most difficult problem, at least difficult in the sense that there was never, ever any kind of rational discussion or of reaching a point of being able to negotiate, was in terms of the director of the Black Studies program at the college." OHTI, Ashley L. Johnson.

Between the trustees and faculty was the administration, and the comments of several board members did not go unnoticed on the newly-appointed interim president. "Personally," he wrote, "I as well as other members of the administration were disturbed over the depth of content to which reference was made, and the general indictment of faculty that was conveyed."[17]

The faculty, or at least the union leadership, detected that the administration shared the trustees' resentment. "In view of the board's distaste for the faculty," wrote Lindstrand, "which I judge to be shared by a substantial segment of the administrative staff, it seems likely that the only viable relationship between the faculty and the board and administration will be a contractual one. Certainly, after last night, I personally view the matter in these terms and I am sure that most of the faculty will when they learn of the board's behavior. This means that the union will press vigorously for strict and full compliance with every aspect of the agreement, down to the smallest detail, using every means at its disposal to insure full compliance on the part of the board and administration."[18]

The Black Studies program, however, provided the source of most stress and strain within the college during this period.[19] This friction stemmed from internal personal conflicts and administration of the program which spilled over into other departments. Soon after Everett D. Davis was appointed Assistant Director of the Black Studies program in February 1971 friction developed between him and the director over the purpose and direction of the program.

In an evaluation report the assistant director was severe in his criticism of the program. "The emphasis of the Afro-American Studies program as perceived by me," he wrote, "has been the promotion of a confrontation between two antagonistic and polarized groups (blacks and whites). This confrontation has resulted in disunity even among 'blacks.' "[20] He continued by stating that the director had disrespected practically every element of authority at the college. "Far too much attention," he wrote, "has been placed on protest, social revolution, trips, jazz shows, irrelevant speakers and not enough attention has been placed on developing a responsible academic and intellectually defensible program."[21] The assistant came down hard on the director. "As I have had the experience of working with it, (the Black Studies program) has not lived up to the expectations of the scholarly community," he continued. "Under its present leadership it has been little more than a waste of funds for the expression of selfish power drives, protests, showboats, campus disturbances, representing disunity among blacks as well as blacks and whites."[22]

The consequences of such a report from the assistant director were predictable. "An honest, objective evaluation," the assistant director wrote, "can only come from outside evaluators."[23] Soon the Black Student Union was urging the dismissal of Davis. "We the students at Prairie State College," a memo to the president stated, "have the feeling that our future and the future of our Black Studies program is in jeopardy as long as the assistant director of our...program continues to make his presence felt by his blatant debasement of the students."[24]

The dispute with Director of Financial Aid, Calvin Savage continued and intensified. Insensitivity to black students needs and "discrimination against blacks" in the disbursement of government work-study funds were the charges. Blacks received "indecent and immoral treatment" from Savage, the director stated."[25] In rebuttal, Savage reported that black students benefited substantially from state scholarship funds and veterans' scholarships administered by his office.[26]

Other segments of the college were drawn into controversy with the Black Studies program in connection with art work sponsored by the program. Sachio Yamashita, who had been appointed an artist in residence by the previous administration and assigned to the art department, was contacted by the Black Studies director to create painting depicting Afro-American culture. These paintings appeared in the Black Studies department and other college buildings. Faculty and visitors to the campus objected to these paintings. When the chairman of the art department concurred with these objections the controversy intensified. "I consider the work done by Mr. Yamashita to be completely detrimental to the best interests of the college and particularly to the Art department," protested Albert Piarowski. "If the Art department," he continued," is expected to contribute positively to the reputation of the college, we must have some level of cooperation between the administration and other departments. I do not feel this can be effectively achieved if Mr. Yamashita is employed in any capacity with the college."[27]

Adding to the difficulties of the Black Studies program was the problem of accreditation. This was more critical to the program because without accreditation by the Illinois Junior College Board the program could not be state-funded and doubtless would collapse.

In this respect the Prairie State College Black Studies program was not unusual. It was a common problem shared by all colleges that inaugurated Black Studies in the late 1960s. The question was not its need but how best to organize and administer such a program. That is, would it be a separate department granting a degrees such as history, chemistry or mathematics; or would it be integrated into several departments? Harvard, Yale, the University of California (Berkeley) and other colleges faced the same issue.[28]

Because there was no baccalaureate degree in Black Studies awarded in Illinois or any other college in the country in July 1969 there was no need for an articulation agreement. Thus the program was approved as leading to an Associate in General Studies degree.[29] On this basis the program qualified for state funding. In September 1970 another application was made to make the program lead to an Associate in Arts degree, but this was denied, and the program remained an Associate in General Studies.[30]

A further complication was lack of enrollment. Despite the apparent dedication and support of Black Studies especially among black students (the courses were open to all students and white students were encouraged to enroll) enrollment in the 1970 fall semester was seven students. During the spring 1971 semester it was three.[31] Though such low enrollment did not threaten the program, it had to raise the question of how popular and widespread the support was for Black Studies.

By the end of the spring 1971 semester, the tension, turmoil and controversy surrounding the Black Studies took its toll in terms of personnel resignations and terminations. Savage "reluctantly" resigned in an emotionally-tinged defense of his conduct before the board. "The black against black, or white against black confrontations at Prairie

State College," he stated, "cannot be resolved by appeasement to wild demands of a small number of students." He scored Benjamin Cooke and William Townsend for influencing and manipulating black students to create disturbances on the campus. "Their actions," he continued, "are based on personal motives of power drives, racism and disrespect for the college and the administration. This is not a black against black demand that I be discharged; it is a demand by a fraction of the student population and faculty..."[32]

A part-time instructor in African history and politics resigned giving the reason that he could not teach effectively in the atmosphere of "controversy and tension" that surrounded the program.[33] The appointment of Yamashita was terminated.

These resignations and terminations, however, did not resolve the turmoil within the Black Studies program. The director and assistant director remained in their positions as the fall 1971 semester began with a significant jump in enrollment to 94, up from four the previous semester.[34]

Internal friction did not escape the trustees at this time as the extensive absence of one member delayed the appointment of two members to fill vacancies. Filling these vacancies presented a special problem in the fall of 1970 because of the change in the character or representation of the trustees.

When the college became independent from the high school five of the seven board members were residents of Chicago Heights. Following the election of April 1970 there were no board members residing in Chicago Heights, the locale of the permanent campus yet to be constructed. In order to adjust for this imbalance the board took care to select at least one of the two appointees from Chicago Heights. Since one of the vacancies was from the unincorporated area, the school code required that one position had to be a resident of this region. A screening committee was appointed and several committee meetings were held to select the two members for trustee approval.

William A. Jackson, an original champion of the Black Studies program, objected to the board's procedure. Rather than hold a series of executive sessions to interview candidates, as required by law, he argued that the board ought to hold special elections to fill all vacancies. At the meeting to approve the appointment of the unincorporated board member, William P. Braker, Jackson left complaining of illness, thus depriving the board of a quorum and requiring another special meeting for Braker's approval.[35] At a subsequent meeting the trustees approved the appointment of Patrick A. Parisi, a native of Chicago Heights. Jackson attended the meeting at which Parisi took his seat as a trustee but was absent for several subsequent meetings.[36]

These continual absences drew the ire of the board and evoked a sharp letter from Chairman Lester K. Kloss who asked Jackson to express his "future intentions" regarding board service and requested his resignation, if he no longer intended to be active. Jackson returned to the board late in January 1971 and completed his term which expired in April 1972.[37]

Within a few weeks the trustees were jolted to learn that Chairman Kloss would not seek reelection to the board. Five years of dedicated service in tumultuous times had taken their toll. Kloss was a leader in the annexation process which created the Prairie State College district in 1967. He recommended the "Kloss Plan" which provided the pattern for annexation creating the geographical size of the college district which prevailed for the remainder of the first 25 years. He served as a representative of the Rich Township district and was elected to the board in 1968. He was chairman from 1969. He stated his reasons for retiring as follows:

> When we were creating the college and in the early years of the college it was fun. I looked forward to every board meeting and came home from every meeting feeling that we were accomplishing something. Then we got beset with all these problems, the unionized faculty, the strikes, the black militants. It no longer got to be any fun, plus my business responsibilities were growing at the time...and when it isn't fun anymore, you are not making a maximum contribution.[38]

To replace Kloss as chairman the trustees chose James H. Griffith who was elected to the board in April 1970. A native of La Grange, Ill., Griffith was a graduate of the University of Illinois and held the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in chemistry from Cornell University. A chemical and industrial engineer, he was a resident of Homewood. He would establish a record for the longest length of service as a trustee of Prairie State College.

Before the trustees could change chairmen, however, the board received another jolt after the trustee election of 10 April 1971. The legal requirement at this time (it would be changed in 1973 when the community college system was taken out of the school code) that one trustee must reside in and represent the unincorporated area of the college district and the effort to clarify this requirement in the voting, embroiled the college in another law suit.

In this election two candidates (Parisi and Hill) were running for three-year terms; both were elected by wide margins and there was no dispute. There were four candidates, however, who were running for a single position to fill an unexpired term of one year. Then there was one candidate, Braker, who was running unopposed for a one-year term as trustee for the unincorporated area.[39] According to legal opinion, Braker would be automatically elected (because he was the only candidate running for election as an unincorporated member) unless another candidate residing in the unincorporated area received more write-in votes than he did. This did not happen.

In an effort to clarify this technicality, college election officials circulated a memo and a copy of a newspaper editorial which correctly interpreted the legal requirements on the ballot.[40] When the election results were canvassed at the next trustee meeting, the three candidates who had been defeated for the one-year, unincorporated area position, protested and on 29 April two of them filed suit to declare the election void on the grounds that "voters were confused by the ballot format and were influenced improperly by copies of newspaper editorials which were circulated to the election judges and were visible in some polling places."[41] On 28 July 1971 the court upheld the election of the four trustees.[42] The college's penchant for involvement in the courts continued; but this one only lasted three months and was one of the shorter ones.

Besides these internal issues there were external problems. One was the action of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Junior College Board requesting more restrictions and restraints on course offerings. Early in 1971 the college became aware that the Board of Higher Education was influencing the Illinois Junior College Board to eliminate programs lowest on priority. Thus the Junior College Board would see that every course offered would be part of a certificate program, that all transfer courses would be articulated with curriculums of four-year colleges and that state review would be required whenever the expansion of course offerings in a curriculum exceeded nine hours.[43] As the interim-president pointed out, these review actions were a threat to establishing policy that rightfully belonged to college boards.[44]

Another problem emerged. In January 1971 Richard W. Hostrop instituted a legal suit against the college alleging that he was wrongfully terminated in violation of his federal constitutional rights of free speech and procedural due process of law claiming $4.2 million in damages.[45] The college had no choice but to defend itself. The case lasted nine years, all the while drawing attention and time away from the ponderous problems confronting the institution during this troubled decade.

The problem of selecting a president remained. Johnson had been appointed interim president for a year. In January the board's personnel-policy committee stated that interviews would begin following the April election of trustees. It was the plan to screen the applicants to a final list of six and appoint a new president by 1 August.[46]

By April, however, little progress had been made toward selection of a new head. Litigation connected with the trustee election further complicated the search. Johnson's position became tenuous and ambivalent. The position of a "lame duck" term at this point was not attractive to the acting president who had provided yeoman service during the tumultuous nine-month period. Assuming that the board may have passed over him in the search for a new head despite his performance during this trying period, the interim president took himself out of the race and pressed for an early decision on a successor. "I am officially notifying you," he wrote, "that I will not be a candidate for the presidency of Prairie State College. I feel that it is vitally necessary that you make every effort to follow the timetable which would identify a president and have him begin employment no later than 1 August 1971. In the meantime, I will attempt to continue to serve in what I consider to be the best interests of Prairie State College."[47]

When Johnson's intentions became public knowledge support surged from students and supportive staff. The Student Senate passed a resolution urging Johnson to reconsider his withdrawal and the supportive staff urged the board to do everything in its power "to retain this very courageous, capable man."[48]

When the board's Personnel-policy committee reported late in May that its review of 102 applications for the presidency had revealed no candidate with "overriding qualifications" the decks were cleared for a draft of Johnson. Despite facing a petition in the courts for a temporary injunction preventing the trustees from appointing a permanent president (the injunction had been filed in connection with the Hostrop case and had been pending for more than nine months), on 22 June the board removed the interim status and appointed Johnson president.[49] "The board members," the statement read, "share the feeling that you have begun to do the task which the college has badly needed. The board is behind you in your efforts to bring about a complete reevaluation of the curriculum and possible reorganization of the faculty and administrative structures. We sincerely hope that the measures you have initiated will make Prairie State College a more effective institution and increase the educational opportunities for residents of the college district."[50]

The president-elect, however, reserved his decision to accept the position until a later date albeit he indicated that he would advise the board of his position before the new fiscal year began. A few days later he accepted the appointment. "I feel proud and honored," he wrote, "that six members of the Board of Trustees have selected me to serve as president of Prairie State College during 1971-72 ... It has become quite apparent to me," he continued, "since public action was taken by the board ... to appoint me, that I must reconsider. My decision to accept was made after I had reflected in depth on the assets and liabilities at Prairie State College."[51]

Now at least the college had a full fledged president with the strong support of the whole institution. There seemed to be at least a semblance of unity with which to meet the arduous tasks at hand.

Taking Stock and Planning

The changing of chief administrators provides a time for self-evaluation and a look toward the future. After dealing with immediate and critical problems for more than a year under the leadership of Ashley L. Johnson as interim president and with him now appointed president, the college found time in the late summer of 1971 to take stock and lay plans for the next decade.

Johnson, as vice president for instructional affairs, alerted the trustees to the need for "a searching self-evaluation" of the college. The needs of the community in terms of training and education were changing. The switch from an industrial to a service economy was having its affect on the college curriculum bringing about the need for community colleges to provide different kinds of courses.[52]

A hard look at the philosophy of the college was required. The president called this to attention. "There are two priority projects," he wrote, "which I want to pursue as soon as possible: one, the development of a philosophy and institutional goals at Prairie State College; the second, to conduct an objective in-depth study and review of the various curricula at the college."[53]

Besides the need for a review of the college's philosophy and curriculum, Johnson impressed upon the trustees the need for reorganization of the faculty and administrative structures.[54] When Johnson assumed the presidency he had set at least three specific tasks for his administration. It would look at the philosophy with the idea of minor modifications, it would look at the curriculum and it would look toward a reorganization of the faculty and administration.

Planning for many years ahead encompasses a larger view to accommodate broader developments. Late in 1970 the college took steps in this direction after a vice president attended a seminar on long-range planning for colleges. A few weeks later this vice president and another vice president attended a workshop for junior colleges interested in long-range planning.[55]

For several months the administration considered two concepts of planning. One was a master plan idea and the other was simply a long-range plan. After several sessions the decision was made to pursue a long-range plan rather than a master plan. It was agreed that a master plan would not allow for radical changes in substance and would be less inclined to answer the hard questions that arise from time to time. That is, a master plan would be more rigid. On the other hand, the group agreed that a long-range plan presented a more realistic projection of what could be accomplished.[56]

The faculty was advised that a long-range plan would be carried out in several phases. The first phase would utilize college historical data from 1966-71, inclusive, as the basis for making projections for student enrollments and credit hours over a 10-year period

(1971-81, inclusive) as well as to develop a series of tentative projection rationales. Phase two would be an evaluation phase of the existing college program. In helping with this evaluation phase, the faculty was requested to complete a questionnaire of 73 items.[57]

The faculty promptly advised the president that they would not complete the questionnaires. "Speaking for our departments or program personnel," the statement read, "we do not plan to complete the 73 questions in the ... program."[58] The reasons given were that the faculty had not been brought into the long-range planning from the beginning and their professional duties did not provide time for answering the questions. Without faculty participation, the long-range plan that Prairie State College had initiated on its own became dormant.

Within a few months, however, the development of a long-range plan for the college received a boost from the state level when the Illinois Board of Higher Education adopted a formal request that each college, and the Illinois Junior College Board, develop and present a "master plan"[b] for the state as a whole by March 1973.[59]

The college formed a Master Plan Committee. Special efforts were taken to include the faculty. "The purpose of this committee," the president explained, "is to review in detail our existing master plan and revise the plan considering the recommendations that will come from this committee."[60] Several months of work proved a learning experience for the faculty as one member expressed. "The committee has developed an appreciation for the value of such planning," he wrote, "as well as the difficulty in developing a realistic and meaningful draft. "We feel," he continued, "the attached document would best serve our college when viewed as a valid beginning, within the context of an ongoing process, and not as any established or final position."[61] Faculty and administration together thus produced a report on the importance and need for institutional master planning for trustee approval.

The trustees directed the president to proceed with the revising and development of the master plan. Planning would become an integral part of major institutional decisions; the planning function would be given a place equal to the other major administrative-management functions; the planning function would be viewed as a standing and continuing process; and these planning outcomes would serve as a guideline for evaluating general institutional achievement, efficiency and quality of performance.[62] For Prairie State College, planning was an accepted principle for the college itself and its relation to the Illinois junior college system.

The next step was establishing priorities. At a subsequent meeting the trustees listed these priorities as alternatives for prospective students, improving and developing community relations, articulation, internal organization, community and student services, student involvement, scheduling, clarification of the general education concept and a curriculum survey.[63]

Besides planning for the future the trustees realized the importance of the past and planned for its preservation through the care and maintenance of college records. In May 1973 the college became the first community college in Illinois to establish archives.

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[b] This plan is not to be confused with the Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois developed in the early '60s consisting of three phases. Even among educators there was confusion over these phases and this is another reason why the Prairie State College administration was reluctant to use the term in connection with its long-range planning.

Purpose of the archives was expressed in a paraphrasing of the inscription on the National Archives in Washington, D.C.: "This place holds in trust the records of our college life and symbolizes our faith in the permanency of our college as an institution."[64]

In connection with the concern for planning the college reviewed its mission and goals. Many months of self-study produced an official mission statement of goals in the fall of 1973. This amounted essentially to an affirmation of the original pronouncement of philosophy which was stated in January 1978. "The board of trustees, administration and faculty of Prairie State College, an open humane institution," the statement read, "accept the responsibility to promote and provide educational opportunities for all within its community who seek them ... the college will provide experience and guidance for individuals of varying aptitudes, proficiencies and inclinations within a variety of environments. These experiences will reflect support of: logical, experiential, and creative thinking; awareness of one's self and concern for his fellow man; independent attitudes. Such experiences should afford to individuals guidelines for realistic life-supporting action."[65]

The college, indeed, had not lost its vision. "The goal we had and the vision we had," stated Chairman Patrick A. Parisi, "was that it (the college) would have an identity as an institution of higher learning, not just a place of last resort for people who could not afford to go to the big times."[66]

Thus, having confronted extremely difficult problems, the college took time for a self-evaluation, learned that it had not lost its vision nor its goals, reaffirmed its commitments and developed plans to carry out the mission of a community college.

Getting a Temporary Handle on Deficit Spending

Along with the commitment to provide educational services, a community college has the commitment to provide these services at an affordable cost. With inflation this became a difficult problem for Prairie State College as the 1970s began. Only a cooperative effort among all segments of the college over several years enabled the institution to get a temporary handle on deficit financing and make these services affordable.

When the operating budget (the budget for operating the college from day-to-day) for the 1973 fiscal year came under consideration in March 1972, the estimated deficit was $647,000.[67] Over four years this debt burgeoned 248.2 percent overall with an average annual increase of 38.2 percent varying from a high of 76.1 percent in 1968 to a low of 31.2 percent in 1969.[68]

Abnormal operating costs during the first several years explain much of this deficit. The operating budget for Prairie State College, much like that of all community colleges, consists of two main funds. First is the educational fund which includes costs for instruction and is for the most part salaries. For Prairie State College this consumed nearly 80 percent of the budget or much more than most colleges because the faculty was composed largely of senior members at higher salaries. Other categories in the educational fund were institutional support, student services, administrative costs, instructional support and public services. A second fund is maintenance. Revenue to cover these costs came from three main sources: local property taxes; state funds; and tuition and fees from students.

Operating costs were simply rising much faster than sources of income. This, however, was not a peculiar problem for Prairie State College. Many community colleges were experiencing this.[69] Prairie State College did, however, suffer more than other colleges in the local tax levy because the 12 cents-rate adopted in March 1966 had not changed.[70] This rate was among the lowest of Illinois community colleges.

Contributing to the deficit problem was the difficulty in estimating accurately the cost accounting of different programs. A vice president explained the problem. "Dental Hygiene," he stated, "is a very expensive program but this course is highly effective in terms of service to the students and the community. Other courses and program," he continued, "have few students but if they serve the community they should be continued even though they seem to be a bit expensive."[71]

The critical condition of the budget was such that the trustees believed an all-out attack was necessary and moved "that the administration be instructed in the preparation of the new budget to prepare the budget so that revenues exceed expenditures by at least $200,000.[72] In April 1973 the newly-elected chairman placed a sound budget high on his priorities.[73] "This is a significant challenge," stated the president, "and at this time I am not certain whether or not it can be achieved without having general negative effects on the total institution, and particularly the program of instruction. Be this as it may," he went on, "we will have to attempt to meet the challenge."[74]

The various segments of the college moved to the challenge with no complex formula or secret plan but much like a private business or even a family would move to make ends meet. First was the need to reduce expenditures and second was the need to locate additional revenue.

An extreme step and a change in attitude brought about a sharp reduction in expenditures. The president described the procedure. "First of all," he stated, "after a very careful review and examination of the financial situation of the college, we discovered that there were great inequities in the salaries that were being paid, particularly to certain members of the administration."[75] Administrative salaries were frozen. "So it was at this time," the president related, "...that we developed a plan whereby ... with the cooperation of the administrative staff, that we would freeze salaries. Some of these salary freezes," he continued, "would be for a rather extensive period of time while in other cases, it would be for a shorter period of time. But we would eliminate any salary increases for any administrator, including myself, until we were able to get the salary structure into some reasonable condition."[76]

Salaries of supportive staff personnel were examined and here too inequities were found. Significant changes were made in the supportive staff salary schedule but there were no freezes implemented.[77] Faculty salaries were not affected because they were covered in the union contract.

The next move and perhaps the most important one was to change the attitude about spending. If the challenge was to be meaningful "everyone was going to have to begin to tighten up and move in a direction which would greatly reduce what had become a pattern of some exorbitant expenditures," stated the president.[78] Departmental budgets were scrutinized closely and monitored. To be expected, there were protests. "I do not understand the reason," protested a department head, "for the Physical Science department receiving less than half of its request for capital equipment."[79] But the attitude did change throughout the college. "In looking back," stated the president, "I have to express appreciation to everyone at the college because right across the board, people began to realize that there were changes that could be made, and if those changes were going to succeed, that everyone was going to have to begin to tighten up."[80]

Increasing revenue was the next phase. The college took several steps in this direction. Tuition was increased for both in-district and out-of-district students. In 1971 tuition was raised to $12 an hour for in-district students and in 1972 it was raised to $14. This increased revenue substantially because Prairie State College offered many programs that were attractive to students who lived out of district and enrollment of in-district students continued to rise steadily.[81]

Because of the innovative nature of some of its program, the college was able to tap these as sources of additional revenue. The Child Development program was proving so successful that it was developing extension courses throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. Established under the Headstart program (Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act 1964) the Child Development program was eligible for government grants.[82] Another offering which brought additional government funding was the Instructional Services program which qualified for funds under Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965.[83] Health services were also priority programs for funding. Thus the Prairie State College Nursing program was eligible for additional funds.[84] Though these program did not bring in funds for the college at large, these grants reduced pressure on the budget for funds that could be used elsewhere.

In another effort to augment financing the trustees established the Prairie State College Foundation "to assist in fostering and forwarding the work of Prairie State College." A general not-for-profit corporation, "the Prairie State College Foundation," the resolution stated, "is organized and shall be operated exclusively for educational purposes to assist in developing and augmenting the facilities and carrying out the educational functions of Prairie State College."[85] The idea of a foundation had been broached at an administrative meeting in September 1968 but no action was taken at that time. During the first few years the foundation achieved limited success.[86] Later it would become a significant force in advancing the college.

One common method to raise revenue was neglected. This was the referendum to raise the tax levy. The slight was intentional. Between December 1968 and March 1970 the college had gone to the district three times in unsuccessful efforts to raise the tax levy. The trustees were determined to take other avenues to raise revenue before returning to the electorate for help.

While the college was taking draconian measures to cut expenses, revenue help came from other sources, largely the state of Illinois. Credit-hour grants, or apportionment, increased.[87] These are the matching funds which the state pays for students attending a community college. For example, for every hour of credit that a student takes in an approved course at a community college, the state pays an apportionment.

Beginning with fiscal year 1972, the state of Illinois provided another boost with the establishment of equalization funding.[88] The purpose of this financing is to provide an equitable level of state support for each student in an Illinois community college.

Several factors are involved affecting the financial support for a community college student. Take two community college districts, each with the same enrollment. One is a wealthy district having a high assessed evaluation and a moderately-high tax levy; the other is a poor district with a low assessed evaluation and a high tax levy. Because they have the same enrollment they both will receive approximately the same amount from the state in apportionment of credit-hour grants; but the wealthy district with state funds will be able to expend much more per student than the poorer district with the same amount of state funds. To adjust for this inequity a formula is devised to determine what the level of state support should be for each student and for those colleges which fall below this level.[89] For colleges like Prairie State with a moderate assessed evaluation but an extremely low tax rate, equalization funding provided significant financial assistance.

These drastic efforts to cut expenditures and self-help steps to find sources of additional revenue which were buttressed by increased state support produce dramatic results within three years. On 1 August 1974 at a workshop session President Johnson took pleasure in announcing to the trustees that the operating budget for the year ending 30 June 1974 showed a net surplus of $188,243.[90] The cumulative deficit had been reduced by $300,368 in three years. "The cumulative deficit reduction achieved here is," the trustee chairman stated, "due to the frugal and efficient management of the college administration headed by President Johnson. The board, on behalf of the people of the district," he continued, "wish to salute you, the administration, faculty and supportive staff, for this tremendous achievement which cuts against the grain of current experience in most educational institutions today."[91] In thanking the chairman, the president emphasized that the accomplishment was the result of all college segments: "faculty, administration and supportive staff; and the board who have given encouragement and guidance."[92]

Trustees and Internal Issues

During the first half of the decade of the '70s the trustees moved toward more collective stability in terms of longevity of service while dealing with many internal problems. These included procedures for revising college policies and procedures, reorganization of the administrative and instructional services segments and the persistent issue of the College Calendar. Other lingering problems such as tenure and continuing litigation involving the deposed president vexed the institution during this period.

In the early 1970s the board was more stable than in the chaotic late '60s. Only 13 people served as trustees between 1970 and 1975 as compared to 11 in the previous three years between 1967 and 1970. Furthermore, the average length of tenure for each trustee during this half-decade was two years and eight months compared to one year and eight months for those who served in the previous three years.[93]

The profile of the board in terms of minorities and women holding board positions and their occupations modified somewhat in the early '70s. Only one black served on the board, and he held office less than a year while three blacks held board posts during the late '60s. No other minorities were represented, meaning that there were no Hispanics, Orientals or American Indians. There were, however, three women board members during this time as compared to two in the late '60s.[94]

In terms of occupational categories the trustees expanded their representation during the early '70s. There were two Certified Public Accountants and two homemakers (housewives) and one of each of the following categories serving on the board: corporation manager, industrial psychologist, lawyer, doctor of medicine, chemical-industrial engineer, businessman, editor, aquarium director and teacher. In the late '60s by contrast, there were three businessmen, two doctors of medicine and two corporation managers providing the majority of trustees.[95]

Election under regulations of the school code remained the process for selecting trustees during the first few years of the decade. These rules required that one member represent and be elected from the unincorporated area of the district. In 1973, however, the Public Junior College Act (Public Act 78-669, 10 September) placed Illinois Community Colleges in higher education. Thereafter trustees were elected from the community at large.[96]

Throughout the early '70s elections continued on a non-partisan basis, without involvement of local political machines. There was a pattern for winning trustee positions. Winning candidates scored heavily in their own residential district and ran fairly well in the other sections. One election quirk, however, developed in 1975 in a case of mistaken identity. Because of the way a name was written on the ballot the electorate became confused with another resident of the district having the same name. "The winner," said a board member, "was the most surprised person in the world."[97]

One of the first issues confronting the trustees after the appointment of an interim president in July 1970 was deciding on the method of board procedure; that is operating as a committee-of-the-whole or with standing committees. Under the previous administration the procedure had been for the most part a committee-of-the-whole. With the deterioration of administration and trustees relations over the last several months fresh in their minds, the trustees considered the standing committee procedure using staff personnel for resource purposes. Doubts abut the efficiency of this system came from administrative leaders. The dean of business services expressed his anxiety. "I have a major concern," he stated, "that the board will be operating at an administrative level, rather than a policy level...the line of demarcation between committee and administrative actions can become very indistinct"[98] After considerable discussion, the board officially adopted the formal committee structure.[99]

Several board members explained this change in procedure. "It seemed," stated the chairman at that time, "at that stage of our evolution there were many problems ... and they required ... committees so that people could provide immediate attention to the problems in large doses."[100] The operating procedure changed "principally," as another board member stated, "because there was such a big turnover in trustees that no longer was there enough residual expertise to have somebody who was really experienced head up every one of these major categories."[101]

Stated another chairman, "We abolished the committees and went to a committee-of-the-whole because most of the things that were occurring all of the trustees really should have known about anyway." He continued, "consequently, we ... had a chairperson with the rest of us as the committee, so that one person shaped leadership for different committees....That seemed to work much better. We have worked almost entirely that way since."[102]

The trustees continued to come under constraints of amendments to the Open Meetings Act. Passed in 1957, this law was amended in 1967 and again in 1969. Another amendment in 1972 (Public Act 77-2549) prescribed penalties for violations of the act and an amendment in 1973 (Public Act 78-448) prescribed minimum requirements for open meetings and allowed boards to impose stricter penalties on themselves.[103] Prairie State College trustees, however, were never in jeopardy with the law in their proceedings albeit the law required vigilance.

Another piece of legislation, however, evoked more constraint on the part of board compliance. This was Public Act 78-822 (12 September 1973) "to provide for non-voting student representation on ... boards of public junior college..."[104] Since 1967 the trustees had provided for a student representative to be seated at all board meetings. This representation, however, did not provide for attendance at executive sessions.[105]

A persistent issue during the early 1970s was that of developing a procedure for revising and implementing policies and procedures for the college's operation. In 1968 it was this issue of policy formation which brought to the surface the strong feeling on the part of the faculty for a voice in college planning with the adoption of the first set of policies and procedures. The original union-board contract restricted any changes relating to faculty, but there remained the need for various additions, deletions and revisions for other aspects of policy and more especially the procedure for adopting these changes.[106]

In an effort to establish a method for revising and adopting policy, late in 1972, a policy committee composed of representatives of the administration and faculty was formed. Adoption of the original contract and the restriction therein against any changes relating to faculty essentially took the faculty out of policy formation in deference to the union. This blurred authority of committee members surfaced at early meetings of the committee thus raising the question of the function of the committee.[107] Noticing this confusion, President Johnson attempted a clarification. "From my point of view," he stated, "the committee has the prerogative to review, examine, study, raise questions, and make suggestions regarding any chapter or section of the Policies and Procedures. Any recommendations," he continued, "coming from the committee are subject to review and approval by the union and the board of trustees. Certain items could be bargained through the negotiating process."[108]

With this definition, the committee over the next two years considered various additions, deletions and revisions, covering all parts of the manual relating to board, administration, faculty supportive staff and students. Results, however, were confusing. Late in 1974, recognizing this confusion, the administration and union set about to establish some order, and in June 1975 the trustees approved a Revised Policies and Procedures manual.[109]

When President Johnson assumed the interim office he identified the need for a reorganization of the administrative and faculty structures. The trustees concurred, and reorganization began to be implemented in two phases. The first phase was administrative reorganization. Essentially this consisted of creating three new titles at the vice presidential level (business services, instructional services and student services); and six new titles at the third and fourth level (three assistant deans and three directors). There was one replacement and five additional appointments.[110]

The second phase involved faculty and was to be implemented during the 1974-75 academic year. During the first several years as an independent institution the college had grown from one of a few academic departments to a total of 26, each with a chairman reporting to the president. The faculty reorganization plan involved replacing the title of department chairman with department coordinator and having several coordinators report to a division director.[111] Chairmen would continue as members of the college staff. The purpose of the reorganization, the president stated, was "aimed at a more effective and efficient management operation ... [because the present administrative function is now] too fragmented."[112]

Reaction of the Faculty Union was predictable. "The union," stated a spokesman, "is appalled at the action of the Prairie State College board, on the recommendation of

President Ashley Johnson, to fire 26 chairpersons."[113] Since no chairman was being dismissed this was an over-statement.

The trustees did, however, state that there was another reason behind the replacement of the chairmen. Several weeks prior to the announcement of the reorganization plan, the board and union negotiating teams exchanged "non-economic programs" at which time the board indicated a desire to remove the chair positions from the bargaining unit. Because a department chairman's position includes duties that are essentially administrative, the post is ambiguous and can be considered a management assignment. This places a chairman in a delicate position because in trade unionism there is a sharp distinction between management and employees. A board spokesperson made it clear that the trustees wished to remove this ambiguity. "Simply put," she stated, "the board determined that administrative functions must be in the hands of administrators, not in the hands of people with dual roles, subject to pressures from two sources."[114]

The academic calendar, meaning the opening date of semester classes, proved another sensitive issue between the trustees and the faculty throughout most of the '70s. Traditionally, prior to the '70s, American colleges began classes in September after Labor Day and ended the first semester the following January. About 1970, however, a trend began at many colleges toward an early start for the fall semester, beginning classes before Labor Day and concluding in December. As the trend increased so did the pressure to conform. Consequently, Prairie State College considered adopting an early-start calendar.

There was prompt opposition from the faculty union which had its origins in the early efforts of the college to develop cooperative programs with other community colleges like Thornton. In these cooperative programs either college might offer classes in subjects where enrollments were not large, but the other college would be permitted to allow students to attend these classes and pay in-district tuition. Early in the '70s these cooperative programs began to grow between Prairie State, Joliet, Moraine Valley and Thornton colleges. Faculty teaching classes with small enrollments saw these cooperative ventures as a threat since by combining offerings at one institution, faculty could be reduced at other colleges. But staggered starts, with Prairie State College beginning fall classes after the other colleges opened, provided a safety-catch.[115]

The union's opposition became so firm that it became an issue of whether or not the calendar was a negotiable item in the contract. The trustees, on the basis of legal advice, argued that "it is our opinion that the establishment of the college's academic calendar is a major educational policy decision which is entrusted by law to the board and cannot therefore be compromised by the collective bargaining process, especially in the absence of any public sector collective bargaining legislation in Illinois."[116]

The union nevertheless argued to the contrary. "The union," a spokesman stated, "has negotiated every calendar since 1969. The calendar is and has been a part of the contract; it is a negotiable item."[117] For the administration, however, compromise was not out of the question and an olive branch was offered. "While the college firmly believes that the academic calendar is not negotiable," stated the president, "we are willing to review and discuss whatever suggestions you might have concerning the academic calendar."[118]

Extensive delays in construction of the main campus building worked in favor of the union position on this point and an early start scheduled for the fall of 1975 was postponed to avoid complications. The early-start calendar was adopted for the fall semester in 1976, thus temporarily resolving the calendar issue.[119]

At least two other problems lingered through the early '70s. One of these was tenure, the long-standing practice in educational contracts under which teachers are assured of freedom from dismissal without specific charges and hearings after a specified probationary period, which at Prairie State College was three years. The serious weakness of the tenure system is the failure of institutions to base the award of tenure on a hard assessment of the candidate prior to the award. In more cases than not, tenure is achieved by default through the mere passage of time.

The issue of tenure was a moot one in educational circles at this time. One view held that tenure should be abolished and replaced with a hard, periodical evaluation of all faculty. President Johnson expressed such a view. "At one time it was necessary," he stated, "but this is not true today. At one time people were unjustly removed from their jobs in the teaching profession. This is not so today." He continued, "I have been following this very closely. There are just as many legal cases involving teachers who are not tenured as with those who are tenured. People should always be subject to evaluation. This is my opinion."[120]

Thus for Prairie State College, as for all colleges with rapidly-growing faculties, tenure was a problem. However, it was not abolished and continued on the basis of a probationary period of three years.

Another problem was that of litigation involving the termination of President Richard W. Hostrop. From the point of view of the college this litigation brought about a switch in feeling from one of relief and satisfaction that the issue was resolved to one of continued concern which lasted several years.

Early in 1972 the court dismissed the $4.2 million damage-suit in which the deposed president sought damages from the college alleging that he was wrongfully terminated in violation of his constitutional rights.[121] It was perhaps the first case submitted to a federal court in which an administrator had challenged his dismissal on constitutional grounds.[122] The college was indeed relieved. Understandably, the plaintiff was chagrined. He described the day of the decision as "a black day for every school, college and university administrator in the nation [because] now unlike students and teachers, administrators have been formally excluded from freedom of expression and process rights supposedly guaranteed by the Bill of Rights."[123]

Relief for the trustees, however, was short-lived. The plaintiff appealed the decision and in December 1972 the court found "that the plaintiff ... stated valid causes of action showing that he was deprived of his first amendment right to free expression and his 14th amendment right to due process of law."[124] Accordingly, the court remanded the case to the district court for consideration of the causes of action the plaintiff pleaded. This decision, however, did not mean that the plaintiff had won his case in the appeals court. The judgment merely returned the case to the lower court for further proceedings.[125]

Inevitably this decision to return the case to a lower court for further consideration boosted the plaintiff's morale. "As you might know," he wrote, "the most significant case in our nation's history concerning the civil rights of administrators has now been concluded."[126] Since the court had really not reversed the decision such enthusiasm seemed a bit premature; but the deposed president exuded confidence. "I fully expect," he wrote, "to resume my presidential duties at Prairie State College within the next several months."[127]

The college petitioned for a writ of *certiorari*, that is a request for a transcript of the proceedings of the case, but this was denied.[128] A hearing was held on the merits of the case in the spring of 1974 before the same judge who had heard the original case in the U.S. District Court. A week before the trial, however, the plaintiff moved to amend his complaint to allege an action based upon breach of contract, thereby filing a demand for a trial by jury. The trial judge allowed the amendment but denied the jury demand as untimely and proceeded with a bench trial lasting a week. On 23 September the judge announced his decision which held for the college on all issues and again the plaintiff appealed.[129]

The final judgment would have to wait another five years.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A MAIN CAMPUS AT LAST

Prairie State College holds the distinction of having achieved several firsts among Illinois community colleges. These include among others construction of the first building to be built for and occupied by a community college in Illinois, outside Chicago (see Exhibit B); and the institution of a Child Development Program in connection with a Head Start Program, perhaps the first in the country.

It also holds other less commendable distinctions, one being the longest elapsed time between the laying of initial plans for and the completion of a main or permanent campus for a community college in Illinois--eight years. Perhaps much of this delay was self-imposed, but other conditions also contributed to the delay. These problems were resolved over a period of three years and in the summer of 1975 classes began in the main building.

Main Campus Construction Revitalized

Besides the array of problems confronting the college in the summer of 1970 when a new chief administrator assumed office was construction of the main campus which had been dormant since late 1969 due to forces beyond the college's control. The slumbering project was revived in 1971.

Ensnaring the college were inflation and attempts by the state government to deal with it.

The bump struck early in 1969. In 1967 the bond issue which the district passed provided state matching funds of 3 to 1 with local funds to construct a main campus for Prairie State College. These funds were administered by the Illinois Building Authority which was a quasi-public agency created by the state in 1961 to oversee construction of various state building projects.[1]

Early in February 1969 the college was preparing to open bids on construction of its main campus scheduled for June only to have the project halted.

The jolt came on 5 February 1969 when recently-inaugurated Governor Richard B. Ogilvie announced that the people of Illinois faced a financial crisis requiring a 10 percent cut in state appropriations for the two years ending 30 June 1971. "At present," the governor stated, "we teeter on the brink of bankruptcy." He ordered that new, public construction projects be frozen indefinitely.[2]

The effect upon Prairie State College was devastating. There would be no state funds for campus construction for at least two years.[a]

A second force delaying campus construction was the court proceedings involving the purchase of the property on which the main building was to be erected. On 24

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[a] Much to Governor Ogilvie's credit, he did not stop at reducing expenditures. To raise revenue he strongly advocated the enactment of a 4 percent income tax. He conceded that this would threaten his re-election, but he expressed the hope that he would be the first governor to institute an income tax and still be re-elected. The tax was enacted (Public Act 76-261, 1 July 1969) but Ogilvie failed to be re-elected in a close race in 1972.

November the Circuit Court of Cook County ruled in favor of the college on acquisition of the site property, but the decision was appealed.

The main campus building construction project was reactivated in 1970. This was done under terms of Public Act 76-1762 in which the Illinois Building Authority was required to analyze building needs for junior colleges.[3] So the college reapplied.[4]

In 1971 the campus construction problem began to turn around The governor's economy measures began to reduce expenditures and the income tax increased revenues. Vigilance in expenditures was not abandoned, but in view of the brighter fiscal outlook, the freeze in public construction was lifted. In May the General Assembly released funds which included more than $7 million for the Prairie State College main building construction.[5]

Another boost came a few months later in October when the Illinois Appellate Court of the First District affirmed the December 1969 judgment of the Cook County District Court. The plaintiffs sought a rehearing which the court denied on 23 December 1971.[6] At long last after four years the way was clear to purchase the site for the main campus. The college was now at liberty to proceed with condemnation proceedings and buy the property based on the value of 10 November 1967.

Ground was informally broken on 14 August 1972 just east of Coolidge Street at the intersection of Roberta Lane. At 10:00 A.M., Doris Hill, a trustee; Ashley Johnson, the president; Brian Knight, Richard Jensen and H. Robert Andrews, administrators; and Richard Sherman, a senior faculty member who had witnessed the groundbreaking of each of the segments of the college campus, trudged up the hill. A workman started the bulldozer and broke the first ground. The president took the controls for a few moments and photographs were taken. Frustrations of many years had taken their toll and dulled enthusiasm of the small group in attendance.

Groundbreaking deserved better recognition, so an official ceremony was held on 1 October 1972. This would be an institutional event, meaning one in which the institution could mark a milestone, honor an achievement and advertise its future. The college rented and erected a large, red and white candy-stripe tent on the meadow east of H Building for the occasion rather than deal with the rough terrain on the south campus where the main building would be located. The day was bright, warm and clear as only northern Illinois can produce in early autumn. Governor Ogilvie delivered the principal address. Harold H. Metcalf and Albert H. Martin, the first two chief administrators of the college also spoke. Other special guests included the original trustees. More than 3,000 invitations were extended in addition to inviting all Prairie State College graduates and certificate-holders. Nearly 1,000 attended the ceremony.

Rather than simply breaking ground, the governor and special guests planted an oak tree as a symbol of growth for the college. This tree was later transplanted to the front of the main building. A long-time top administrator considered the ceremony one of his most rewarding experiences at the college. "One of the most rewarding experiences," he stated, "was seeing the ground broken on this permanent campus. It took," he continued, "the better part of a lot of nerves and a lot of sleepless nights before we got to that point and I was very happy to see it completed."[7] After several years of stress and strain within the college brought about by the Civil Rights movement, Vietnam War protests and faculty strikes, the event provided a sorely-needed coming together and revitalization of the college.

Annexation Resolved

Among the many reasons for rejoicing at the ground-breaking ceremonies was resolution of the annexation issue that had plagued the college for more than four years. Within eight weeks after this pleasant ground-breaking occasion the city of Chicago Heights annexed the interim-campus site, clearing the way to begin construction of the main campus. But inter-community tensions were again resurrected. After this episode, however, these strains never surfaced again.

Only formal approval by the Chicago Heights City Council was still needed, and this came on 27 November 1972 when the council unanimously approved an ordinance "providing for the vacation of portions of certain streets and alleys in the city of Chicago Heights."[8]

Since the fall 1969 opening of the interim campus north of Vollmer Road, this campus remained outside the city limits of Chicago Heights, thus requiring the college to contract for police and fire protection. Vollmer Road remained quasi-developed between Halsted and Coolidge Streets with access at two places to the interim campus.

Coolidge Street was a real issue. In 1968 the college had agreed to pay the costs of widening Coolidge Street from Joe Orr Road to Vollmer Road to provide access to the main-campus building. With the status of the site delayed in the courts, however, the college declined to carry out this construction. When students and others began to use Coolidge Street for automobile-access to the campus between Joe Orr Road and Vollmer Road, residents along Coolidge Street protested to the city of Chicago Heights. In addition to heavy traffic, college auto parking began to clog Coolidge Street. So the city barricaded this street at Vollmer Road without consulting the college.[9]

Students protested to the board. "In [my] years at Prairie State College," a student said, "I have never seen as much anger on the part of the students, faculty, employees and administration."[10] The president, another member of the staff and a delegation of nearly 20 students, took the matter to the City Council. The mayor informed the college that it was the city's understanding that the college would complete the widening of Coolidge Street soon. The president replied that "any obligation was included as part of a total package of annexation and at no time was the Coolidge Street project a project unto itself ... this would cost the college $100,000."[11] But the City Council refused to open the street.[12] Not only were barricades up but so were tempers.

There was another factor in the dispute having to do with vacating the streets and alleys on the site on which the main building was to be constructed. In the original plot of the site there were 19.8 acres of strips which were dedicated as public rights-of-way to serve as streets and alleys. When streets and alleys are surrendered they are said to be vacated. Illinois statute allows municipalities to charge for the vacation of land dedicated as public right-of-way; but it does not require that a charge be made. At this time the Chicago Heights Plan Commission recommended to the Chicago Heights City Council that "all streets and alleys" in the site be vacated.[13]

Accepting the recommendation of the Plan Commission, the Chicago Heights City Council used an appraisal figure of approximately $12,000 per acre. To this was added an adjustment for an increase in property values, and the Council advised the college that the city was prepared to accept $250,000 for its interest in vacating the streets and alleys in the main-campus site.[14]

The college sought its own appraisal since it was clear that the city was not prepared to grant the vacation gratis. The college appraisers judged "that a unit value of approximately $0.12 per square foot, or approximately $5,350 per acre, is applicable to the subject property.[15] On the basis of square feet the value of the vacation property would be $108,931 while the value in acres would be $111,494 and the total estimated fair value of the streets and alleys would be $110,000.[16]

A few months later the City Council lowered its figure and offered to vacate the streets and alleys for $225,000.[17] The college was confronted with a difficult decision. Making a bid with state funds for construction of the campus was rapidly approaching. There were two choices: The college could decline the offer, but the state money available at that time would have to be refunded. Then the college would have to find another site with clear title before being put back on the priority list. This would require at least five to 10 years. A second option would be to seek a reduction in the price asked for vacating the streets and alleys, obtain an agreement, and proceed. The trustees decided on this option.[18]

The City of Chicago Heights accepted the appraisal of $110,000 and late in January 1972 an agreement was reached. The agreement contained two parts. First, the trustees agreed to widen Coolidge Street from Joe Orr Road to Vollmer Road and in turn the City of Chicago Heights would annex the 50 acres comprising the interim campus north of Vollmer Road. Second, for the college to have complete title to the 70 acres of the campus south of Vollmer Road, the City of Chicago Heights would vacate the streets and alleys for $110,000, the amount of the college's appraisal.[19] At long last the final hurdle barring title to the main-campus was removed and construction could proceed. In 1975 work began on the extension of Vollmer Road from Halsted to Chicago Road, and the project was completed within a few months.[20]

The trustees' decision to approve payment for vacating the streets and alleys was not unanimous. One dissenting member, Doris Hill, chose to dramatize, in a well-crafted statement, what may well have been the majority feeling of the trustees albeit they felt compelled to approve the payment so the college could complete the main campus. "Illinois statute allows municipalities," she wrote, "to charge for an action of vacation of land dedicated as public right-of-way; it does not require that a charge be made. Indeed," she continued, "it is the usual practice by municipalities that land, which has not had prior use as a public street or alley, is returned to the adjacent property owner--in this case Prairie State College a nominal fee ... It is also the usual practice that if the public land is to remain for public use--as in the case of vacation to other taxing bodies such as schools or parks--the municipality makes no charge for the action."[21]

The trustee continued to score the City Council. "Their unique practice," she wrote, "results in the public having to pay a fee to continue public use of public property which had originally been deeded--at no charge to the public--for public use."[22] Her ire went on. "... any city that penalizes schools...ignores that it would be less than a city without schools. The City of Chicago Heights is not an island, self-contained and self-sufficient. It is one layer of a multi-layered structure of governmental bodies, each levying taxes on the same taxpaying pocketbook. For survival it is an absolute necessity that all governmental layers cooperate in bringing to the residents all of the necessities and services needed for their well being."[23]

She went on to urge taxpayers in Chicago Heights and future students of the college to take note of the action by the City Council for forcing funds to be utilized for clearing title that might better be expended for equipment. The trustee concluded by explaining the board's action. "The Board ... has done it duty as it saw it," she wrote, "accepting as we have the lesser of two evils. Our choice, as we have seen it, has not been a clear-cut decision of right over wrong, but of providing--or not providing--a much-needed and long-awaited educational facility for the residents of this area. It is to them, the residents and taxpayers, that we owe an apology not for the action taken by this board ... but for lacking whatever divine foresight necessary to avoid spending $110,000 of their money in exchange for 10 minutes worth of paper work. I hereby tender that apology."[24]

The Chicago Heights City Council had its point of view too, though no statement was made. The council believed the charges were justified for at least three reasons. First, no communities in the college district or surrounding area had ever conveyed municipally-owned real estate to any other taxing body free of charge. The Council recognized that developers of new sub-divisions may be required to set aside a percentage of real estate to a municipality for parks and schools, but this is not comparable, the Council held.[25]

Second, the Council held that the charge was justified because it was the amount which the streets and alleys were appraised by the college's appraiser. Furthermore, this figure was much less than the calculated real property assessment for taxes. For example, the college appraisal amounted to $0.12 per square foot where the City of Chicago Heights calculated property assessment for taxes at $0.256.[26]

A third reason to justify the charges was that the main-campus consisting of 70 acres and the interim-campus consisting of 50 acres would require fire and police protection but would not produce tax revenue. Thus, these costs and any city services that would be required in the future would be borne by taxpayers from Chicago Heights and not shared by the entire district.[27]

Complicating the argument was the resurrection of inter-community strains which prevailed during the annexation of adjacent high school districts to form the college district only a few years before. The college originated as Bloom Community College and when Prairie State College was formed in 1967 the trustees, except for one, were Chicago Heights residents. By 1972 the trustees had no representative from Chicago Heights albeit one member had been reared in Chicago Heights.[28] Some resentment remained over the change in the name of the college. A prominent Chicago Heights business leader who did not share this view expressed the point. "Maybe...some of them," he stated, "just didn't go for the idea of Bloom Community College being changed into Prairie State College and Bloom's loss of faculty and facilities."[29]

There were many residents of Chicago Heights who did not share the Council's position. One business leader could not understand the Council's stand. "I just don't know why in the world," he stated, "they took that attitude."[30] Another trustee and native of Chicago Heights found it difficult to explain. "It was very unfortunate and unconscionable," he said, "and not easily explained in any other way than just a chance politically to get some money into the city treasury from areas that were outside of Chicago Heights."[31] At the same time a member of the Council who had been a Bloom High School board member during the formation of the college district and who came on the Council in the middle of the dispute sought to facilitate the issue. "I wished to help the process," he stated, "and attempted to resolve the issue as quickly as possible when I came on the City Council."[32]

The Main-Building and Campus Completed

More setbacks and frustrations, some usual and expected, others less usual and unexpected, developed during the three years before the building's completion in the fall of 1975.

Building a campus in the late 1960s and early 1970s required an orderly but sometimes quite complex process involving six agencies or offices. The college took the first step requesting funds. Next the Illinois Junior College Board approved the request before sending it on to the third stop at the Illinois Board of Higher Education. If and when funds were made available by the General Assembly and the local college, the Illinois Building Authority (IBA) administered them.[33]

The Illinois Building Authority was established in 1961 (Public Law 76-1762) as a device to overcome the limitations imposed on the state by the Illinois Constitution. This quasi-public agency was authorized to sell bonds declared to be in the public interest by the General Assembly. The IBA constructed community college buildings from the income of these bond sales. The buildings were then leased to the public body.[34]

Before state money could be matched with local college funds the General Assembly appropriated these amounts and the governor approved them. These were the last two steps of the building procedure for community colleges.

When construction began the college had approval of the IBA for a project of $8,193,334 for the main-building campus. Of this amount, the state provided $6,145,000 and the college $2,048,334.[35] In May 1971 the Prairie State project was to received $10.3 million.[36] This sum was reduced for two reasons. First, the phenomenal growth of education in Illinois during the 1960s, especially among community colleges, had consumed large expenditures; and a critical austerity which commenced in the early 1970s required a reduction. A second reason for cutting back the Prairie State College project was that the original conveyance called for 60 acres of property for the main campus which was reduced to 45 acres, representing a saving of nearly $300,000 for the state.[37]

In the fall of 1971 the college sold bonds in the amount of $4.4 million for construction purposes and in May 1972 conveyed the campus property to the Illinois Building Authority.[38] At long last the main campus project was moving along.

In July 1972, however, Public Act 77-1995 created the Capital Development Board (CDB) to replace the Illinois Building Authority and the college was required to convey its real property to that agency.[39] The Illinois Constitution of 1970 permitted the state to finance major capital improvements from the sale of Capital Development Bonds. Insofar as community colleges were concerned the CDB consolidated all state capital construction under one authority; funding was through general obligation bonds resulting in lower interest rates; and community colleges were required to deal with one agency rather than many. Conveying of property and contracts from the IBA to the CDB required a trustee resolution, and this action was completed in August.[40]

Original plans called for completion of the main building and campus within two years. It took 35 months which was much longer than two other large construction projects that began about the same time in the area. One of these was the Sears Tower in Chicago. Plans for this building (the tallest in the world, 110 stories and 4.4 million square feet) were announced in July 1970 and the topping out took place in May 1973.[41]

Another construction project at this time and one much larger than the Prairie State College undertaking, was Governors State University at Park Forest South (Governors

Park).[b] Ground was broken for the main building at Governors State in June 1971 and the structure was occupied in January 1974 before dedication in April 1975.[42]

These comparisons raise the questions: Why did it take Prairie State College so long to complete its main building and campus? The answer is that the college fell victim to the usual cost overruns and delays which confront any large construction project.

Much delay was due to change orders, meaning procedures prescribed when any modification in structure or equipment is needed. Any change required an order initiated by the president, the business manager and the trustees. Frequently one change did not suffice and modifications required two or three additional ones.[43] This consumed days at least, often weeks and many times months before resolution.

In addition to causing delays, these change orders contributed to rising costs and conflicts with the Capital Development Board, which held final authority over the construction project. Many change order requests came about either from an architectural error or omission, or from what appeared to be a lack of coordination by the contractor. The Capital Development Board approved many of these change requests which almost without exception increased costs. Yet the CDB seldom placed a claim against the architect. At the same time the CDB would not advance additional funds to cover these cost overrides. Thus the college was compelled to meet these rising costs and faced the possibility of paying for the entire project.[44]

The longest delay came when the electrical sub-contractor went bankrupt. This virtually halted construction for several months until a replacement could be found.[45] While searching for a new electrical sub-contractor, a lightning storm struck the trailer office of the original sub-contractor and destroyed all of the on-the-site records thus extending the delay.[46]

There were other delays. A truck drivers' strike involving ready-mix concrete crippled construction for nearly two months. Then there was a problem with a shortage of roofing material. Other problems arose with exterior masonry and the interior metal walls system. Excessive periods of rain contributed to delays also.[47]

The construction project presented other problems for the college, one being community relations with residents in the area of construction. For example, construction workers parked cars on Coolidge Street, creating congestion and traffic problems. Paper and litter created another complaint. In an attempt to improve relations with these residents, the college held an open house to answer questions.[48]

Then there were injuries to workmen albeit there were no fatalities as in the Sears Tower construction where six persons were killed.[49] There was, however, at least one serious accident when a worker fell from a scaffold through a window.[50]

Then as the project neared completion a confrontation arose between the trustees and faculty over a question of conflict of interest in the appointment of an interior-design consultant. When a dispute erupted between the original interior designer and the trustees, the husband of a staff-employee was appointed to complete the task.[51] We (the board) believe that there is no conflict morally," stated the chairman. "I don't understand the backbiting by the faculty. If there is a conflict of interest, I wish someone from the faculty would explain it."[52]

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[b] Governors State University was created in 1969 (Public Act 76-421) to serve as a capstone university for the junior colleges throughout the Chicago area as part of the Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois. Sangamon State University at Springfield was created to serve a similar purpose for junior colleges in that area.

Delays, however, allowed the college to take advantage of improved communications technology at a reduction in costs. About the time that construction began court decisions provided that telephone companies could not require customers to rent equipment from the telephone company. Consequently, it became expedient for large establishments to purchase their own equipment and pay only interconnecting and line-usage charges to the telephone company.[53]

By hiring a consultant to research the problem, the college was able to install a system which included the latest features in telecommunications at a low cost. The system adopted was a mini-computer microprocessor, instead of a mechanical switching board, providing for more than 35 conversations at one time.[54] Although installation was expensive, the savings over a period of several years paid for the equipment and system itself. In addition, since the cost of telephone equipment could be paid for from construction funds, this represented a significant cost savings.[55]

At long last, the main building was occupied with the opening of classes in September 1975, eight years and four months after original plans were laid. No other Illinois community college took so long to complete, but no other Illinois community college confronted such problems.

For some the completion of the building was amazing. But on that bright September morning there it stood, large and strong. Some even called it a fortress. Located on a slight hill with attractive landscaping, it was not unlike a Grecian temple. The Greeks built their temples on hills because they believed that temples embodied the spiritual. Those thousands who have entered Prairie State College have entered for education, which is also of the spiritual realm. And the effort at times is especially keen like on a winter's night when the wind is high and the temperature low. Perhaps one of the original trustees, an engineer who traveled many miles to examine community colleges, described it best. "I feel," he said, "the college obtained an excellent, permanent building that is both economical and effective for the purpose for which it was designed. My regret is that it is not aesthetical enough."[56] If not quite aesthetic, the building is not without astheticism.

A somewhat less enthusiastic put perhaps more realistic evaluation came from the director of physical facilities who worked on construction of the main building. "The structure of the building, that is, the core of the building structurally," he said, "is probably as good as you can get. Unfortunately," he said, "when you go through the building you look at dry wall construction versus block or more durable surfaces; and we are constantly making repairs. But I think this goes through the construction industry in general. "When I started," he said, "back in the middle-forties, pride and workmanship were the rules. Those were not the exceptions. Today it is the exception when you wind up with a good job, that is, an excellent job that should be worth the money you make. I go back to the old saying, "'we seem to have time to do it over but we never have time to do it right.'"[57]

The building stands four stories high enclosing 250,000 square feet. The structure is built around a dramatic enclosed mall which runs the full four-story height to clerestory windows which admit natural daylight from the north and south sides. The mall, which is also utilized as a student commons, is surrounded with spaces devoted to service functions and student activities. These include the Learning Center (library), data and computer center, staff and student dining space and food service. The second floor is devoted primarily to offices and contains the upper portion of the Learning Center, a large lecture hall, a staff lounge and the trustees' room. The third and fourth floors are devoted to classrooms and laboratories. Joining the main building through two passageways is a one-story technology building which contains a gymnasium and multi-purpose room, auto mechanics laboratory, mechanical technology laboratory, precision instruments laboratory and a duplication center,. Between the two buildings and the hallways is an atrium.

Besides toil, sweat and tears the main-building and campus was not completed without considerable expense. At completion the main campus cost the taxpayers of the district and the State of Illinois approximately $11.15 million including land acquisition. The interim-campus including land acquisition cost $1.5 million for a combined figure of $12.2 million.[58]

In terms of educational costs, buildings and equipment are among the few items on which a price tag can be placed. Did the Prairie State College campus cost too much? There are those who say it could have been built cheaper and quicker at another place. This is conceivable; but it is moot and academic and will never be known. That it took too long there can be no denial; but it hardly cost too much when the premise is accepted that the value and service of education are immeasurable.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

STUDENT SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The student body at the opening of the main building in 1975 was a far cry from that which opened the college in 1958. Nearly two decades had passed, and changes were evident. There were more women, the average student age was older and more students were attending night classes than day classes. Financial aid increased while student life turned from protests to reviving traditions and building new ones. Intercollegiate athletics which began in 1959 had been discontinued.

A Student Profile

A visitor who came to the Prairie State Campus for a day and an evening in the fall of 1970 and again for another day and evening in the fall of 1974 would notice changes, some rather clear, others more subtle. The visitor might detect more women on the second visit. This was not marked, however, so it might escape the casual observer because in 1971 there were slightly fewer females than males (48.8 percent), but by 1974 there were slightly more females (50.6 percent).[1]

The same observer might detect that the students in 1974 were slightly older than 1970 students. In 1970 the average age of the student body was in the low 20s, but in 1974 it was 28 with the 19-year-old group providing the largest group of students (586) followed by 18-year-olds (543) and 20-year-olds (453). The next largest group included 36 to 40-year-olds (379). Overall the ages ranged from 16 to 78.[2]

During the second visit the observer would notice that the women were older than on the first visit when most were coeds in their late teens and early 20s. In 1974 there were many more young married women in their 30s and 40s. Many of these women were those with young families or others who had raised their families and were training or retraining themselves to enter the labor market.

The same visitor would also notice that in 1974 many more students attended in the evening than in the day. This perhaps was the most significant change because in 1970, 63.6 percent of the students attended day classes whereas in 1974 those attending day classes comprised 44.2 percent of the total enrollment. On the other hand night attendance increased from 36.4 percent in 1970 to 55.8 percent in 1974.[3] The big change took place in 1973 when night attendance jumped dramatically from 36.4 to 53.5 percent.[4]

This relates to another phenomenon taking place in the early 1970s and one which the casual visitor could not detect. That was the increase in part-time students and the decrease in full-time students. In 1970, 35.6 percent of the students were full-time, but this dropped to 29.1 percent in 1974 while part-time students comprised 49 percent of the enrollment in 1970 and increased slightly to 53.8 percent in 1974.[5] A third category of student was those who took courses for no credit. This category remained rather constant during the same period--15.4 percent in 1971 and 16.9 percent in 1974.[6]

There was also a slight increase in the number of minorities among the student body. In 1970, 8 percent of the students were black. Hispanics accounted for 1 percent and Orientals and Native Americans comprised 1 percent.[7] By 1974 these figures were 12 percent for blacks; 3.4 percent for Hispanics; and 1.6 percent for others, representing an overall increase of 8 percent for minorities.[8]

Another noticeable segment was veterans. In 1972 there were approximately 300 veterans enrolled and this figure increased during the decade.[9]

In one respect, however, the college remained unchanged. It continued to be a community college with 91 percent of the students residing in the district. Eight percent enrolled from out of the district with 1 percent consisting of foreign students.[10]

Qualitative aspects such as academic achievement could not be detected by the casual visitor, but would require examination of admission records. This would show that a large portion of the student body would be described as "disadvantaged."[a] In 1973 more than two-thirds of the students enrolled scored below 21 on the American Council on Testing (ACT) examinations which is the "cutting" score for admission to Illinois four-year public colleges and universities. Prairie State College students remained concentrated in the lower ranges of the ACT scores, had lower high school grade point averages, and were likely to have graduated in the lower half of their classes.[11] Furthermore, nearly half of the entering students read at or below the tenth grade level.[12]

To carry out its mission Prairie State College was obliged to provide educational and training opportunities to meet the needs of this student profile.

Student Aid

Perhaps the highest priority of student services at Prairie State College is financial assistance, because without this help, many students could not attend college. During the early 1970s the amount of financial aid available to Prairie State College students increased dramatically due in large part to grants from the federal and state governments, while local funding actually declined during the same period.

Throughout the early 1970s, as from the opening of the college, the largest source of student financial aid came from the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (Public Law 78-346), the "G.I. Bill of Rights." This law provided funds for veterans for tuition, books and living expenses for four years of schooling. Supplementing this law was the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-508). These laws provided the basis for $10 million of assistance to Prairie State College students between 1971 and 1976. During the fall of 1974 veterans at the college were receiving in excess of $126,000 per month in federal assistance.[13]

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[a] The term "disadvantaged" has several connotations. One perspective is "socialization into attitudes, values, and norms which serve to inhibit advancement into the mainstream of society and especially advancement into the occupational positions which would provide the material rewards desired ... We may therefore regard the term disadvantaged' as synonymous with culturally different'.2" (J. L. Morrison and R. Ferrante, "The Public Two-Year College and the culturally Different," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, February 1973, as quoted in A. M. Cohen and F. B. Brawer, *American Community College*, 241-242.

During the same period federal grants to non-veteran students increased dramatically. In 1970, the college received $90,632 in federal funds which increased to almost $600,000 by 1973, representing a gain of 565 percent in three years.[14] These federal government funds provided for a variety of programs, including College Work Study, Educational Opportunity Grants, National Direct Student Loans, Department of Interior grants, Law Enforcement grants, Nursing grants and Nursing loans.[15] Only a small amount of these federal funds, however, provided for scholarships.

Funding for these programs stemmed from an arousal of interest in education on the part of the federal government in response to the Russian Sputnik launching in 1957. Soon thereafter came several federal laws providing funding for education. First was the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (Public Law 85-864). Title II of this law provided for loans to students. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452) provided funds for work study programs. In 1965, Title IV of the Higher Education Act (Public Law 89-329) provided more aid for students, and the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-318) provided funding such as the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants program which came to be known as the Pell grants for its chief sponsor Senator Clayborn Pell.[16]

State funding for financial aid during the same period increased also, but at a much more moderate pace. In 1973 state programs provided $270,000 of financial assistance for Prairie State College students. These programs included the Illinois Monetary Award, Illinois Veterans Scholarship, Illinois Guarantee Loan, Vocational/Technical Work Study and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Public Aid Grant.[17] Like federal aid, most of the funding was in the form of non-scholarship assistance.

Scholarships were seldom available to part-time students, but this was corrected early in 1975, when half-time students (those taking at least six hours) became eligible for state scholarships.[18]

Besides a few private scholarships, Prairie State College sources provided a very small portion of financial aid to students. Whereas federal and state government support increased sharply, local support actually declined during the early 1970s. In 1969 local sources provided 20 percent of the work study funding, but in 1973 the college's own resources supplied only 10 percent of financial assistance to students.[19] Filling this void in scholarships became one of the first priorities of the Prairie State College Foundation.

Besides financial aid, Prairie State College students received other assistance. In 1972 a testing program was started to provide help to students and the community. These services included the administration of interest tests and placement tests, and the development of a testing center for the administration of national and state examinations. The testing program also provided students with advanced placement opportunities.[20]

Other student services were provided. In 1973 an inter-faith Campus Ministry Council was established to develop "mutual relationships of the college with the religious institutions the area."[21] Opportunities were also provided for high school students to take college credit courses at Prairie State College upon early high school graduation.[22]

There were, however, other areas of student assistance that were slighted. There was no health service or personal health program albeit arrangements were provided for emergencies at a nearby hospital.[23] Although counselors attempted to screen incoming students to provide necessary assistance to handicapped students this service was neglected in terms of special ramps or aids provided for the handicapped.[24]

Student Life and Activities

With the winding down of the Vietnam War in the early 1970s, student concerns shifted from national issues to campus problems and from activism to college traditions. Meanwhile a few college activities continued to attract few student participants.

Though the primary purpose of college is learning, students spend much time socializing and fraternizing. With the advent of universities in the Western World in Europe during the High Middle Ages students began gathering in eating and drinking places throughout the towns in which the universities were located. Here lifetime friendships were formed. As higher education moved westward across the United States in the centuries that followed, this tradition continued. Not until the 20th century, however, did large state universities begin to build student unions to provide student socialization and activities on campuses. Thus gathering places and activities other than strictly teaching and learning became an important, if not essential, part of a college education.

Building F at the eastern edge of the north quadrangle served as the Student Lounge and focal point for students at Prairie State College during the early 1970s. Except for two offices, this entire building was devoted to students. Physical fixtures included tables and chairs and vending machines supplying sandwiches and soft drinks. Jukeboxes provided music. Sometimes there was live entertainment. At times a student would play a guitar. Other times a combo of students performed. These were Prairie State College students or professional groups from the area that were funded from college activity fees. During morning and early afternoon hours the Student Lounge was a popular location, and at times seating was inadequate, especially between classes late in the morning.

When night school was in progress the lounge was not as popular. Before evening classes began, the lounge attracted students who were younger than the majority of evening students.

Seating patterns in the Student Lounge in the early 1970s demonstrated that social stresses of the late 1960s carried over into the early 1970s. These casual patterns tended toward cliques rather than integration among the students as a whole, drawing the scorn of student editorial writers. "There are," wrote the student newspaper's editor, "always the same tables occupied by the same faces. It all adds up to a clique...although they exist in most schools, it is the first time I've observed one since I've been here."[25] The editor continued, "just come in the lounge via the west entrance and you'll notice that all the so-called Brothers and Sisters' sit near the jukebox and the vending machines. The next few rows consist of whites. You can't but help notice that they are white because (at) the 21 tables left, you just see white faces."[26]

The editor continued his candid prose. "The stench of racism, bigotry and ignorance," he wrote, "are beginning to surmount, and it does stink. Where does it stink the most?" He went on, "...I'm in no position to take sides, but...what are we all afraid of? Are we afraid of whites because we are outnumbered and can't do anything but use little clandestine tactics to show that we can take over? What is it?"[27] He wrote further, "Most of you whites can appropriately be called Honky, Charley and Whitey due to the attitude you put out towards others...What is it, a superiority complex?"[28]

In an attempt to advance their own cause, black students organized the Black Student Union "for the purpose of providing a better scholastic, cultural, political, and social life for black students of Prairie State College. The Black Student Union is and shall be a democratically constituted organization of all black students at Prairie State College to maintain high scholastic standard, and to nurture unity and pride among black people."[29] This union undertook a scholarship program and raised funds through an annual Miss Omejide beauty contest among Prairie State College black coeds.[30]

Despite voluntarily segregated seating in the Student Lounge and the creation of a Black Student Union, social strains moderated in the early 1970s. At least there were no racial outbreaks like those in the late 1960s.

Activism and protests subsided noticeably after the late 1900's. In May 1970, students held a strike against attending classes in sympathy for the Kent State University slayings. But two years later in May 1972, only 35 students and two faculty members attended a moratorium to protest the United States decision to mine Haiphong Harbor in North Vietnam.[31] At the ground-breaking ceremony in October 1972, only a few anti-war activists distributed material; and one confronted the governor as he was turning the soil to commemorate the beginning of construction on the main building, but there was no real activity.[32]

Apathy continued to be the main problem according to student editors. "I would estimate that 60 percent of the students on this campus," read one editorial, "don't participate in any school functions.[33] A good example of this," he continued, "is in the recent Student Senate elections...[where] only 160 students bothered to vote. That's only 5 percent of the whole student body!"[34] A "bitter cesspool of apathy seems to be flourishing at Prairie State College."[35] Organized efforts by students to collect recyclable materials failed to gain support. One such drive "would have been a failure if it were not for a local grade school's generous donation of...materials," the editor related.[36]

Another student editor two years later scorned the absence of activists. "What happened to student activists? An alarming number of students," he wrote, "don't seem to care what's happening in the world, or closer to home, what's happening in their own school. Why, after years of student unrest, riots, total rebellion to the establishment' have students stopped caring?"[37] Another small turnout for a student election concerned him. "Just recently in the student elections, 86 out of 4,000 eligible people voted. Why the small turnout?"[38]

Activism, however, did not disappear. It was alive though perhaps at a less intense level than in the late 1960's. The issues shifted from international and national problems to campus issues. The barricading of Coolidge Street evoked a concerted student response. "In the three years I have been at Prairie State College," a student stated, "I have never seen as much anger on the part of the students... [and] he indicated that "petitions are being circulated by the students and there probably will be a delegation of students at the next city council meeting."[39] Construction on Halsted Street continued to provoke students to circulate petitions for the opening of Coolidge Street to student traffic to alleviate traffic congestion during registration.[40]

There was also concern in the early 1970s about returning to more traditional commencement ceremonies. Traditionally, commencement represents the apogee of the academic year for colleges and universities, marking the completion of years of study and preparation for entry into the world outside of academia and the pursuit of a career or life's work. At this time recognition is given to students for their achievement in the awarding of degrees and bestowing of honors. Families gather to rejoice and share pride. Commencement ceremonies represent academia at perhaps its most elevated level, and to protest against commencement is to strike at academia.

Late in the 1960s and early 1970s it became a common practice to protest at college and university commencement exercises throughout the country. These protests took various tacks such as going in bare feet, carrying slogans, carrying flowers and other tactics. Prairie State College experienced none of these types of protest, but in 1971 student pressures led to a change in the form of commencement to that of a banquet affair.

Surveyed in 1971, students chose to hold a banquet rather than the traditional commencement with academic costumes. Relatives and friends were invited and degrees were awarded at the banquet. In 1971, 1972 and 1973 commencements followed this style. Students gave two reasons for adopting this informal procedure. There was declining interest in attending college-wide graduation activities in the late 1960s, and there was no on-campus facility suitable for commencement exercises.[41]

The decision to hold a banquet instead of a traditional commencement was not, however, completely acceptable to all students and led to the formation of a mini-traditional program in 1971. More than 30 middle-aged, married women who were candidates for degrees and certificates requested the president to hold a formal ceremony at least for them. The request was granted, and a commencement ceremony was held in Building K. The studio was decorated with flowers and a piano provided music. Graduates participating were all women, mostly in their late thirties and forties. The class was about half black and half white.[42] The ceremony was traditional and attracted a standing-room audience. A 77-year old mother of one of the graduates came from Alabama for the ceremony. This commencement drew feature stories in the local press and proved one of the most notable Prairie State College commencements.[43]

In 1974 the college returned to a formal commencement service. Perhaps the main reason for the change was economics. Banquet costs for a family resulted in even a smaller number of graduates attending than for a formal commencement.[44] Protests and demonstrations against formal commencements throughout the country were also diminishing. Tradition seemed to be prevailing.

The commencement of 1974 proved another notable one. It was the first commencement to be held on the interim campus.[45] The ceremony was conducted in a large tent like the one in which the ground-breaking program was held and on the same location between Building K and Building J. More remarkable, everyone escaped without injury despite a heavy rain and windstorm bordering on a tornado. The downpour of rain permeated the tent and water dripping on the back of the electric piano and organ threatened the organist with electrocution. Thunder claps punctuated the service. Exodus of the crowd at the close of the service could have set a record for speed albeit there is no evidence because nobody dared wait to check the exit speed.[46] The same arrangements and location provided for the 1975 commencement program.

Besides returning to tradition in commencement programs students turned their attention to the creation of a college flag.[47] An all-college committee composed of students, faculty, administration, staff and the Prairie State Women's Club, was formed. The committee decided to sponsor a contest to select a flag with prize-money awarded to the winning entry. Restricted to students, the contest drew a large number of entries. A panel of judges deliberated several weeks before awarding the winning entry to Mrs. Inta Srader.

Utilizing the college's colors of brown and gold, Mrs. Srader described her winning design as follows: "In this design," she wrote, "I have used the Prairie State emblem as a pattern. It is," she went on, "as if the emblem is swirling in space with the colors spilling over it and continuing on and on. The name and date make a good contrast to the swirling emblem and color. Although the emblem is centered, the use of colors and placement of the words does not make it geometric. If a flag is to be flown high on a flag pole, it should be designed in such a way that it would be visible and recognizable from a distance. I believe this flag would meet that requirement."[48]

The flag was officially dedicated at a student ceremony the morning of 24 October 1973 in the quadrangle in front of the Student Union Building F. The event drew a large crowd on a bright autumn day. The program was simple and symbolic. The president spoke briefly and several veterans donned their uniforms and raised the flag informally in a depiction of the poignant photograph of the raising of the American flag over Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima in World War II.[49]

Lack of student participation in college-sponsored activities continued. Student government continued to interest a few students but elections failed to attract large turnouts. In the spring elections of 1972 only 160 students or about 5 percent of the student body voted and in the fall elections of 1974 only 2 percent of the students elected their governing officials.[50]

Underground publications disappeared after a brief life late in the 1960s and early 1970s but so did student annuals. From 1959 through 1967, *Spectrum*, the annual, was published. In 1968, after the name of the college was changed to Prairie State College, the annual changed its name to *Post Script* and appeared again in 1969 under that name, but this was the last annual published. The student newspaper, the *Prairie Statement*, fared better, but publication was sporadic.

Phi Theta Kappa, the National Junior College Honor Society, remained active with annual induction ceremonies, but social activities such as class formals and mixers ceased during the first half of the 1970s.[51]

Perhaps the area of most activity was in Theater and Speech which expanded offerings into the community, and attracting a large number of students in the early 1970s. Like physical education and intercollegiate athletics, speech and theater serve two functions at the college level, curricular in the humanities and extra-curricular in the presentation of plays.[52] The Speech and Theater Department changed its designation to Performing Arts in 1974.[53]

In 1971 the Theater department began soliciting original dramatic manuscripts and producing them before community audiences. Prairie State College became one of the few community colleges in the nation to install such a practice. The program expanded rapidly with many manuscripts submitted each year. "The quality of the plays we get," stated the director, "will run anywhere from mediocre to quite good. He continued, "We don't always get the best writing but at the same time the opportunity is there and people grow by doing it. It's an educational experience."[54]

Besides serving the students in extra-curricular programs, the Performing Arts department expanded its services to the community. A group of drama students calling themselves the Prairie State College Players began to take children's plays into elementary schools in the district, and high school students were invited to the college for matinee performances. These plays included "Of Thee I Sing," and "The Crucible," which were also performed for regular community audiences.[55]

Not only did training in the performing arts lead to widespread community service, but it provided the basis for entry into professional theater for some graduates. Many went on to professional equity theaters in the Chicago area.[56]

The Music department of the college also cooperated in the presentation of musical productions. The College Choir performed at formal college programs and in the community.

Student life at Prairie State College certainly was less stressful during the early 1970s than in the late 1960s. Perhaps it was less active too, but action moved from protests to reviving traditions and building new ones. College-sponsored activities also moved away from social functions such as mixers and formal dances, to theater projects.

Intercollegiate Athletics

Intercollegiate athletics are among the student activities which attract much attention and enthusiasm on most college campuses. During its first 15 years, Prairie State fielded intercollegiate teams in six areas with disappointing results in terms of student interest and participation, and with mixed results in terms of won and lost records. In the early 1970s the college initiated intercollegiate football, but after one year of competition the team was abandoned and the entire intercollegiate athletic program was terminated.

Intercollegiate athletics at Prairie State College can be divided into two periods during the first 15 years. The first stage extended from 1959 to 1972. Between 1959 and 1968 intercollegiate competition was started in six sports. Basketball began the program in 1959. Golf came in 1962; baseball in 1965; cross-country and track, and wrestling began in 1966; and tennis was the last entry in 1968.[57]

Without facilities of its own the college rented the girls' gymnasium at Bloom High School for home games. Considerable enthusiasm marked the launching of the basketball team. During the first two seasons the college sponsored cheerleader squads and twirlers. A student donned a costume and became "Gordie the Gopher" as a mascot. The only missing element was spectators. Even the initial burst of enthusiasm produced small crowds and attendance dropped rapidly. At some games there were actually more people on the two competing teams than in attendance.[58] Baseball presented a similar pattern with only a handful of spectators. Wrestling drew even smaller groups of spectators. The other sports such as golf, cross-country and track and tennis were not generally considered spectator sports in the Prairie State College community. When measured in terms of attendance, student enthusiasm and support for intercollegiate athletics were never substantial if any more than tepid.

While support of the student body was not substantial, actual participation in intercollegiate athletics was no more than moderate at best. Furthermore, participation in all intercollegiate athletics declined steadily between 1968 and 1971. The minimum number of participants or players needed for competition in all six intercollegiate sports was 47; but in 1968-69 only 67 students participated, in 1969-70 it was 62, and in 1970-71 the number declined to 51.[59] Thus, lack of enthusiasm of the student body was matched by lack of enthusiasm among competitors.

Perhaps the most severe measurement of intercollegiate athletics, however, is winning. There are those who hold that the won and lost test is the only one. Judged by these terms, Prairie State College athletics were hardly successful with only one sport, golf, posting a winning record through 1972.[60]

Basketball began intercollegiate athletics in the 1959-60 season. In the early years the cagers won two preseason tournaments of community college teams and included among its victories one over the Loyola University Frosh quintet. Perhaps the peak season was 1967-68 when the Gophers posted a record of 16 wins and nine losses while averaging 91.8 points per game.[61] The team was especially successful during the three-year span of 1968 through 1970, winning second place in the community college sectional tournament in each of these years with a 58.5 percent won and lost record for the three years.[62]

Golf was the second intercollegiate sport to be launched, coming on the scene in 1962. The golf team practiced and played at Lincolnshire Country Club and one or two other sites. Of all the Prairie State College teams, golf was the most successful in terms of won and lost records. The golf team had an overall winning record of 65.2 percent and in 1971 finished third in the Illinois Junior College Meet.[63]

In 1965 baseball started, but having no field of its own, the college utilized the Bloom High School facilities. The best year in intercollegiate competition for this sport was 1968 when the team won its own sectional tournament and the Region Four Championship. In 1970 the Gophers won another sectional. Overall, however, the won and lost record was not impressive with a winning percentage of 46.1 percent between 1968 and 1973.[64]

Cross-country competition began in 1966 and track followed in 1968, but interest lagged from the beginning in both sports. The Gophers never had the minimum number of five runners in cross-country competition. Track teams were fielded in only two years, 1969 and 1970.[65] In 1966 the college entered a wrestling team in intercollegiate contests with mixed results. Between 1968 and 1971 the Gophers qualified several individuals for National Junior College Championships and in 1971 finished second in the conference standings. Overall team records were not impressive, however, with a 17.9 percent team-mark from 1966 through 1972.[66] Tennis competition began in 1968, and in 1969 the team had a record of eight wins and two losses and the doubles team went to the national quarter-finals. Overall, however, the netsters had a 30.6 percent winning record from 1968 through 1972.[67]

Despite the unenthusiastic results in terms of student support and participation and won/lost records, there was no pressure to abandon intercollegiate athletics.

In the early 1970s, though, intercollegiate athletics and their continuation became a controversial issue when pressure developed from students and a minority within the community to install an intercollegiate football program at Prairie State College. With support of at least one member of the trustees, this group urged the adoption of a football program with the idea that such a program would be the "savior of the college sports program."[68] To support a football program students were prepared to contribute $2,000 of student activity funds.[69]

Before taking a position on the issue the trustees sought further information and Athletic Director Robert Rehberg was directed to investigate the feasibility of installing an intercollegiate football program. After looking into the matter he reported to the trustees, "I am forced to state that I am not in favor of the football program being adopted for this September."[70] He listed several items of grave concern. These included scheduling, staffing, facilities, insufficient funds and the public image. He also wrote, "I am of the opinion that the insertion of football into the program at this time would not create a wholesome atmosphere, even with the promise of 'outside financing.'"[71]

The trustees declined to install a football team for the 1970 season. The Student Senate, however, came forth with their pledge of $2,000, taking the matter out of the hands of the trustees and making the football team a student-sponsored club financed independently; so the trustees unanimously approved the use of the Gopher name by a "football club to be sponsored by the Student Senate."[72] A member of the trustees and a member of the Physical Education department directed the program and a "football club" competed in the fall of 1970.[73]

The club won its first game by forfeit. A contest was scheduled with Milliken University of Decatur to be played on a high school field in Decatur. Just as the Gopher Club gridders were getting on the bus word came that because of rain Decatur High School would not permit a game to be played on its field. The result was that Milliken forfeited. One of the disgruntled Gophers summed up the frustration with the remark that "it's a...way to win a football game."[74] Football was underway but on a club basis.

Despite the uncertain success of the Football Club in 1970, pressure continued to install football as an intercollegiate sport and by the narrowest of margins the trustees gave their approval for competition in 1971.[75] The season was hardly successful; it came closer to being a disaster. The Gopher gridders failed to win a game in their eight-game schedule and most defeats were decisive. After the first few days of practice less than 22 players remained on the team, thus making practice-scrimmaging impossible. Injuries further depleted the squad. Some believed that the end of the season was a blessing.[76]

Consequences of the miserable football season were decisive if not drastic. Intercollegiate football, wrestling and tennis were terminated. Golf, basketball and baseball, however, were continued on an intercollegiate basis, but in 1972 all intercollegiate athletics were terminated at Prairie State College. Upon completion of the main building and campus, a feasibility study was done to determine whether or not the college should resume intercollegiate competition.[77]

Despite the trustees' decision, intercollegiate sports enthusiasts continued the struggle for intercollegiate athletics with attempts to complete on a club basis in several sports. An official announcement from the president, however, halted these temporary efforts.[78] But sports were not discontinued entirely. An intramural program continued and plans for a gymnasium in the main building were not altered. Also, a baseball field was constructed.[79]

The Prairie State College Athletic Department found itself involved in an adjacent matter, that of realigning the Northern Illinois Junior College Athletic League in which the Gophers had competed since 1959. In 1969, however, a movement got underway to form a new conference to be named the Skyway Conference. The college applied for admission but was denied. In 1971 Prairie State College withdrew from the Northern Illinois Junior College Athletic League.[80]

The abandonment of athletics should have come as no surprise given the obstacles and conditions surrounding the athletics program. Essential to the success of the program were the students. Students, however, cannot be faulted entirely because most of them came from large area high schools where successful interscholastic athletic programs had developed over many years. They were conditioned to large crowds and a colorful atmosphere surrounding athletic games. When this did not develop at Prairie State College, they turned away. The surprise is that intercollegiate athletics succeeded as well as they did for nearly a decade in view of poor support, especially from the student body.

The program did not produce a profit. That the program was allowed to continue under these conditions is a compliment to the district which viewed athletics as a student activity for the benefit of the students rather than a community public relations program aimed to profit the college coffers. The small minority of football enthusiasts that attempted to launch a full-scale intercollegiate football program actually did the college a favor by providing evidence that intercollegiate athletics, headed by a large football program, was not appropriate for Prairie State College in the mid 1970s.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION STRAINS CONTINUE BUT IMPROVE

While the student body of the mid-1970s changed sharply from that of the 1960s, the faculty and the relations between faculty and administration during the same period did not change significantly. Strained relations between these two groups continued in an environment of mistrust and bitterness. This stressful atmosphere, however, gradually grew toward one of trust and understanding during the first few years of the 1970s.

Faculty Profile and Affirmative Action

During the early 1970s the Prairie State College faculty, in composite terms, differed little from that of the late 1960s. This slight difference rendered the college teaching-staff susceptible, albeit no more than the large majority of institutions of higher education in the country, to affirmative action and thereby more sensitive to discrimination against minorities and women which arose with the social revolution of the 1960s.

Observing the college faculty in 1969 and again in 1974 might reveal that there was not much difference in either full-time (those appointed to teach 15 hours) and part-time (those appointed to teach less than 15 hours per week) teaching staff.

In both cases, however, the increase in numbers was significant. Full-time faculty grew from 64 in 1967 to 85 (between 1971 and 1975 the average was 85) in the early 1970s representing a gain of 30.7 percent.[1] Though there are no comparable figures for part-time teachers there were 97 part-time instructors in 1973 as compared to 84 full-time teachers that year. So the growth in part-time faculty was more significant than the increase in full-time teachers.

In other ways, however, the faculty profile was only slightly modified. For women between 1971 and 1975 the figure was 37.8 percent on the average as compared to 35.9 percent in the late 1960's, hardly a significant difference.[2]

In terms of minorities, the shift was more distinct for blacks, but not for other minorities. In 1968 the college had only one Afro-American on its faculty, but by 1974 there were seven black teachers. This represented a gain of 7.8 percent in six years: that is, the difference between 7.9 percent in 1974 and .01 percent in 1968.[3] For other minorities (Hispanics, Native Americans and Asians) there was no change. There were none of these minorities in either 1968 or 1974. Yet Hispanics were the most rapidly-increasing ethnic group in the college community at this time.

In terms of training, most of the full-time faculty held master's degrees. On the average 78.2 percent held master's degrees between 1971 and 1975. During the same period 5.5 percent of the full-time teaching-staff held doctorates. There was one Doctor of Dental Science in the Dental program and one Doctor of Jurisprudence in the Business department. The remainder were Doctors of Philosophy.[4]

Age-wise a large portion of the faculty were senior in terms of longevity, having held appointments since the early years of the college. A college self-evaluation listed the faculty at this time as 35 percent mature, 50 percent middle, and 15 percent young in terms of chronological age.[5]

Thus, a profile of the Prairie State College faculty in the early 1970s shows a teaching staff somewhat mature chronologically, biased against minorities and to some extent against women but rather well trained in terms of academic preparation. It was a faculty that had increased significantly from the late 1960s but one that did not grow in size during the early 1970s.

Such an imbalanced faculty was not unusual among institutions of higher education at this time. Nevertheless, it was these biases in the faculty profile that rendered the college susceptible to affirmative action prescriptions of the federal government as spelled out in executive orders in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Acts of the mid-1960s and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972.

Affirmative action, meaning a concerted effort on the part of the employer to bring into the work force those persons of minority background and women who have usually been overlooked in the hiring process, originated in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352). This section aimed to establish equal employment opportunity and to prohibit discrimination in employment based on race, sex, color, religion or national origin. Its primary emphasis was on rights for minority people, although it later served as the stimulus for promoting job equality for women.[6]

President Lyndon B. Johnson gave further impetus and effect to affirmative action when he issued two executive orders.[a] The first one, Executive Order 11246 (24 September 1965), was the first to mention affirmative action. It prohibited recipients of federal contacts from discriminating in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin and called for affirmative steps to attract more women and minority applicants for employment consideration. The second one, Executive Order 11375 (17 October 1967), prohibited discrimination because of race, color, sex, religion or national origin by federal contractors. It required nondiscrimination clauses to be part of every government contract and affirmative action programs were required for the employment of minorities in job categories in which they are underutilized.[7]

These two executive orders meant that government contractors must make serious, sustained and extra efforts to recruit blacks and Hispanics for jobs. But these orders did not envision, much less require, quotas or any other form of preferential treatment.[8]

Further effect came in two orders. Order Number 4 (30 January 1970) defined affirmative action and established specific required steps in setting goals and timetables for employment of minorities. Revised Order Number 4 (December 1971) included women in addition to minorities in the requirements for affirmative action and for setting goals and timetables for employment. These two orders covered most industries, and corporations and accounted for about one third of all employment in the country.

Prairie State College became directly involved in affirmative action with enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act (Public Law 92-261, 24 March 1972). Under this act the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which was provided in the Civil Rights Act to administer that law, was extended to educational institutions. The EEOC now had direct access to federal courts and could file suits by or on behalf of an injured person. The commission could apply for court orders to compel record keeping and could request injunctions.[9]

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[a] A president issues an executive order to interpret, implement, or give administrative effect to a provision of the Constitution or of some law or treaty. It has the effect of law if it is published in the Federal Register.

Thus mandated to comply with affirmative action, Prairie State College began to develop a program. Two committees were formed. One was internal, composed of 12 people, and the other was composed of seven individuals from the community.[10] They examined where the college stood at present, and the results were embarrassing in terms of affirmative action. Besides the imbalance of faculty were greater disparities in other parts of the college. In the administration there were 14 people, all white and all males.[11] The committee summarized "that voluntary committee representation at the college reflected middle-class orientation, [and] regardless of the methods used for committee formation, middle-class reasoning is reinforced, [and] governance bodies tend not to include minorities."[12]

Confronted with these deficiencies in affirmative action, the college took positive steps. It established a permanent Affirmative Action Committee and pledged itself "to a positive program of affirmative action that should correct any errors or injustices to students, minorities and women."[13] Thus on 9 August 1973 the trustees accepted the report of the committee and moved "that ... we as a college community are determined to eliminate discrimination against minorities based on race, color, sex, age, religion or national origin; we begin immediately to implement recommendations on how Prairie State College needs to proceed to meet both the executive orders and our institutional commitment."[14]

Stresses, Strains and Strikes

In the early 1970s the relations between faculty and administration modified somewhat for the better, despite persistent stresses and strains. This modification came through collective bargaining.

Throughout this period the administration and faculty of the college debated three issues: Faculty participation in policy making for the college; faculty economic well-being, or money; and faculty accountability and efficiency.

Insofar as the faculty was concerned participation in institutional government was the most important of the three. The extent or ultimate goal of this participation, however, remained a moot question and depended on the point of view. From the administration's stance, the faculty did not wish to stop at participation, it desired control of the college in all areas. "Within the union leadership," one high administrator stated, "was a determined effort to gain more control or power over the administration of the college in all areas."[15] The legal counsel for the college supported this view. "Throughout the period and especially at the beginning," he stated, "it was essentially a power struggle to decide who decided course offerings, new programs; in other words, who really was going to run the academic part of the college."[16] One of the first presidents of the Faculty Senate held this view before the faculty formed a union. "There's kind of a power struggle going on.... There are philosophical differences between the faculty and the administration and between the faculty and the board," he stated. "This power struggle," he continued, "is likely to go on. The faculty should run the college."[17]

Faculty control, without responsibility for being accountable to anyone else, while the administration must answer to aggrieved faculty members, students, and taxpayers, was not realistic. And spokesmen for the faculty in the early 1970s realized this. Administration and teaching were two separate responsibilities, they asserted. "My feeling about the relationship of faculty and administration," said the first Faculty Union president, "is that I think we should leave administration to the administration, and I think we should leave teaching and the decisions about teaching and instruction to the faculty."[18] He continued, "I think [administration] is a service job...I feel that teachers should be involved in college policy making. I don't mean that they should be involved in running the college, administering the college; I think that when there are decisions that affect either the working conditions of the teacher or affect the teaching of the teacher that the faculty should have some involvement in the policy making."[19]

A senior faculty member expressed a similar view. "I'm not sure that it is faculty involvement in government," she stated, "I'm perfectly willing to have the trustees responsible for the college. I"m perfectly willing to have an administration administer this college. But I'm not willing to be a faculty member and not have my views respected and considered."[20]

So the faculty believed that administration and teaching were separate functions; but the faculty insisted on more participation in policy making, especially with instruction.

A second issue over which the faculty debated with the trustees and administration was the hard and persistent question of economics or salary. The faculty felt strongly that it was they who traditionally bore the burden and were the target for fiscal adjustments of the college district. They made this clear in 1971. Under terms of the 1970 contract salary, negotiations could be reopened. The wage and price controls effected by the Richard M. Nixon administration at this time to attack inflation, complicated these negotiations.

In view of these wage and price controls, the faculty accepted an average salary increase of 3.2 percent under protest. "We would like to emphasize," the faculty stated in an open letter to the trustees, "our feeling that sacrifice for the welfare of the students at Prairie State College ought to be a two-way street. Administrators, as well as instructors, are paid from college funds. Last year," the letter went on, "the average increase in administrative salaries was 15.5 percent and this year it was 6 percent for a total of 21 percent in two years."[21] Not surprisingly, the faculty questioned the justification of these increases as compared to theirs.

At PSC a teacher's salary depends upon two variables: training and length of service or experience. New teachers are placed on the salary schedule according to their training and experience. Each year that they are retained they move up the schedule one step for which there is an increment in salary. Their salaries may increase through more training by which they are moved to another column with a greater base pay. An across-the-board pay raise also increases a teacher's salary.

A full-time faculty member can also increase his or her salary by teaching part-time in addition to his or her full-time schedule. Part-time teachers are paid on the basis of a flat rate for a three-hour course. In addition to this flat rate a full-time instructor receives a stipend for extra teaching or overload assignments. Thus full-time teachers have received overload pay for up to eight hours in addition to their full-time assignments.

Salary negotiations throughout the early 1970s were carried out on this basis. In 1972 the faculty sought a 5.5 percent across-the-board increase and the normal increase or increment for length of service.[22] The college opposed this increase on the grounds that funds were not available to accommodate the increase until the budget was in balance.

"If we are to reach a point where we become fiscally responsible," the president stated, "we must begin here, with the professional staff salaries and look in depth at our entire financial situation."[23]

In 1974 the faculty sought an 11 percent across-the-board raise plus the increment.[24] There were several other salary-related items, including district payment of the full medical insurance premiums for faculty members' families as well as teachers, and payment by the college of the 8 percent retirement fund contribution paid by the faculty.[25]

The economic issue was frustrating for both sides. The faculty believed that they were being neglected, but at the same time the college was nearly $1 million in debt and felt it could not offer higher salaries even though they were justified.

A third issue of contention between the trustees, administration and faculty was accountability, meaning responsibility for one's performance. This became an ongoing case of semantics between the trustees and the faculty during the early 1970s.

Among the trustees was a feeling that those in education needed to consider productivity and efficiency. Although he did not express the official position of the trustees, one chairman stated, "We talk a great deal in all phases of American life now about something called productivity and I think we've got to start looking at education in terms of productivity and in terms of cost-benefit ratios. What does education produce," he asked, "for the dollars that we're spending on it?"[26]

He also stated the case for efficiency in education and raised the question of inconsistency when faculty argued that full-time assignments be held to 12 or 15 hours to insure quality education and then turned around and accepted extra assignments of six to eight hours. "I think it's a certainty," he argued, "that cost efficiency is applicable to community colleges. I relate to some examples when we were told in union negotiations that the quality of education would suffer if a faculty member has more than 13 or 15 or 12 hours. Yet," he went on, "that same faculty member would accept up to 21 or 22 hours of class work a week if he were paid overtime for it."[27]

For the faculty, however, the words productivity and efficiency were code words--words that actually meant something else. "Words like efficiency and productivity," for example, "are used instead of quality and depth," the faculty argued.[28] "Efficiency and productivity are solutions to financial woes," the statement went on, "but there must be concern with quality and depth. Many faculty feel that they are always the last to be considered when changes in management relating to efficiency are discussed."[29]

The faculty, however, turned this argument of inconsistency on the trustees. "The board's concern with increased faculty efficiency and productivity for additional compensation, totally neglects the simple fact that longevity accomplishes by its very nature all of the increased efficiency and productivity needed in an educational community."[30]

Accountability, nevertheless, implies evaluation. The college had an evaluating process but it presented a difficult internal problem. A teacher, in each of the first three years of employment, had a detailed report of evaluation submitted to the proper administrator in November. By the following February an official written evaluation was submitted to the proper administrator by the department chairman and no later than March a formal recommendation was sent by the department chairman to the appropriate administrator. In April the president made a recommendation regarding continued employment.[31]

The hard evaluation came at the conclusion of the third year before the teacher gained tenure. This presented a particular problem if the administrator did not want to comply with the department recommendation. "The union felt," stated a vice president, "the effort was an attempt to weed out faculty who fell short so the union used the Policy Manual to prevent me from intruding on academic freedom. But a faculty committee was involved so the faculty had input."[32]

These issues and others were threshed out in negotiations; when negotiations broke down they were settled in strikes which were called on two occasions.

Negotiations between the college district and the faculty during the first few years of the 1970s were carried out in an environment of mistrust and bitterness which grew gradually toward one of trust and understanding. The lack of a state law regulating negotiations among public employees placed both sides in the position of plotting a course through uncharted waters. Illinois courts, however, had established that boards of education could enter into collective bargaining agreements with teachers that would not be void against public policy.[33] On this basis negotiations, which are essential to collective bargaining, were conducted. Paradoxically, this lack of state regulation was welcomed by both sides because it meant that negotiations were conducted entirely within Prairie State College campus-governing processes, preserving the college's self-governance, reasonably independent of state politics and policies.

Teams composed of four members representing each side carried on negotiations. Both teams lacked negotiating experience at the outset. "We were both pretty much in the same boat in the beginning," said one of the administrative team members. "Neither faculty members who were instrumental in establishing the union here at the college or administrators at the college had any professional background in labor negotiations, so we were pretty much all starting off from zero."[34] A faculty negotiator agreed. "We were all naive," he said. "For those of us sitting down on the union side and those sitting down as representatives of the board, it was pretty much, 'feel your way along.' "[35]

Naive and inexperienced as both sides were, animosity soon developed. Contributing to this bitterness was the failure of the faculty, or union negotiating team, to bring the trustees directly to the bargaining table. From the outset the trustees delegated negotiating responsibilities to the administration; despite this arrangement the union negotiators tried repeatedly in early sessions to directly involve the board. In their failure to accomplish this, frustration developed, and from the union negotiators came frequent pejorative references to the administrative team. For example, "lackey" and other more derisive epithets were sometimes directed at the administrative team.[36] This adversarial relationship carried over into the everyday operation of the college since the negotiators were administrators and faculty. This affected the quality of the educational process.[37]

As negotiations continued, both sides gained experience and mutual trust increased. The administration later appointed a chief negotiator as chairman of the administrative team while the union turned to their chief negotiator as chairman for negotiations. This improved relations but antagonism was not eliminated completely because the primary spokesmen were still administrators, and the union viewed them as the real antagonists.[38]

There were other positive benefits that negotiations produced during the early 1970s. The faculty developed a better appreciation and understanding for the overall operations of the college as well as the concerns of the individuals on both sides of the table. Negotiation jousts with the administration also developed unity among the faculty.[39]

The administration gained too. More faculty became involved with the college beyond teaching assignments related to the classroom, and alienation between the two sides diminished.[40] Another benefit to the administration was that standards could be agreed upon in writing and were implemented for all faculty. The agreements and guidelines were spelled out clearly.[41]

Negotiations, however, did not always produce agreements and when this happened the union enforced its ultimate weapon--the strike. In 1972 and again in 1975 strikes were called. The first lasted a week and the second went four days.[42] Both strikes lacked the harassment of earlier ones and there was no physical violence. Except for the usual pejoratives and epithets, the strikes were quiet. Whatever gains there were for either side in the final settlement, during these 11 days, education suffered.

As with negotiations, the strikes produced insights if not benefits. Both sides agreed that the best strikes were those that did not occur. Strikes, among other things, extend and increase bitterness. To avoid strikes, longer contracts seemed to help. This reduced the time spent in negotiations and obviated the "guaranteed annual argument."[43] Another insight and benefit of hindsight was that from the start both negotiating teams ought to be fully empowered to reach agreement at the table.[44]

Thus relations between the faculty and administration continued to be marked with stresses and strains throughout the early 1970s. After several years, however, there was a slight improvement brought about through negotiations. As these negotiations continued throughout the early 1970s to reduce, albeit slightly, the strains between administration and faculty, they demonstrated the effect of collective bargaining on Prairie State College after six years. In general this carrying out of collective bargaining marked the demise of the concept of paternalism, with the president as an authority figure. It opened an era of political accommodation among contending forces. The faculty was gaining prerogatives in establishing the conditions of the workplace including a say in institutional governance. These prerogatives became firmly established as an integral part of the college operation.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

CARRYING OUT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION

Perhaps the main distinction between the early or more traditional junior college and the community college is the community orientation of the latter. Initiatives for new programs in the traditional junior college come from administration, whereas in the community college initiatives stem from the community through advisory committees.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s Prairie State College inaugurated many new programs, carrying out the concept and mission of the community college. Inaugurating these programs was one thing, but the college needed to meet accreditation and certification standards. At times this was difficult.

Providing for Individual Educational Needs

The main purpose of an educational institution is to provide for educational needs. These wants are individual and personal; but before they can be provided they must be identified, and existing programs must be modified and strengthened.

From day one PSC provided students with programs in three areas. These were liberal arts and sciences and general education; occupational or technical training; and adult or continuing education consisting of general studies offered mostly on a non-credit basis. To meet the challenge of changing times, however, educational institutions need to add new programs and review and modify old ones. One of the strengths of community colleges is the flexibility which enables them to accomplish these tasks more easily than other kinds of higher educational institutions.

Late in the 1960s Prairie State College established a procedure for providing courses and new programs. After identifying a needed program, approval was required from three places. First the program needed to be accepted by the Illinois Community College Board to qualify for state funding. Next it needed the approval of the college Curriculum Committee. The main purpose of this committee was to involve faculty in curriculum planning and program development. This committee served as a clearing-house for all courses and programs that the college offered. Its other functions were to determine the depth of study behind a proposal and to make recommendations to the administration concerning the feasibility of each proposal submitted to the committee. Membership included representatives from each department and program in the college. Finally, a program needed approval from trustees for adoption.

Development of the Remedial and Instructional Services Program provides a case study and demonstrates how student needs were identified and a program adopted to meet these needs.

Admission records and testing identified the need for remedial or tutorial help for many incoming students. High school graduates were required to take the American Council on Testing examination. More than two thirds of PSC's students scored below 21 and most of the students were concentrated in the lower ranges of these scores. Moreover, nearly half of the students were reading at the 10th grade level.[1] These scores provided clear evidence that the college was admitting a substantial number of disadvantaged students, and remedial help was necessary to raise the level of achievement of these students to the point where they could succeed in freshman-level courses.

The program began when Katherine Gavin, who joined the college in 1969 as the original director of the Child Development program, was appointed to work with these students. The task began as a team-teaching project with the freshman course in "orientation" which had been offered since the opening of the college to help bridge the gap from secondary school to college for entering freshmen. Vice President Richard H. Jones instructed these students in orientation while Gavin provided tutorial help.

By launching a tutorial program the college addressed the controversial issue of whether any college should admit those who are not capable of handling college-level work. Gavin saw as one of the missions of a community college, the educating of "the disadvantaged or lower ability students, which include the minority students" up to the level where they can handle regular college work.[2] Later developments in the Illinois community college system bore out her contention when programs of this type were mandated for community colleges in the state.

Other minority leaders in the community shared this view. "I think the main task that Prairie State has ... in relationship with the black community, is to forget it is the black community," said one. "Black Americans generally want the same things as white Americans, Italian Americans, or anybody else wants, he continued. "They want to see their kids have the happy life. We know, though, that it takes a good education."[3] He stated further, "...if you keep the demands up, and lower standards, you don't ... accomplish anything ... [in meeting] the obligation of the institution to the community."[4]

Enrollment during the first semester of the tutorial program totaled 32, but there was the usual high attrition with disadvantaged students. The program began in a corner of the Learning Center in Building I with tutoring in reading, mathematics and English. Pleased with their tutoring, students spread the word and enrollment grew so much that additional tutors were appointed. Among these early tutors were Nancy Plotkin and Mrs. Arnold M. Friedman. Soon, 14 Tolentine Seminary students joined the tutorial ranks as the program continued to enlarge.[5]

The tutorial program provided a catalyst for modifying programs in other areas. Prairie State College for some time had offered a General Studies program for non-credit to adults in Continuing Education. To provide recognition for students receiving tutorial help, a General Studies Certificate program was established in June 1971.[6] With continued growth the program was reorganized in June 1973 into the Instructional Services Program and further revised in September 1974. Meanwhile the General Studies courses were approved for credit and offered to adults in Continuing Education.[7]

While programs were being developed for disadvantaged students, other existing offerings required modification. One of these was the Black Studies program.

From the time of its adoption in March 1969 the Black Studies program had been marked with turbulence. Much of this stemmed from strained relations involving the program director. Thus his resignation in January 1972 provided an opportunity to evaluate the program.[8] Black Studies originally was a separate program under Instructional Services. After nearly three years of existence, however, Black Studies at Prairie State College presented a paradox. Some form of Black Studies was needed. There was no movement to discontinue the program, but enrollment was extremely low in some courses with no enrollment in others.[9]

To insure that the Black Studies program would not be seriously damaged in the absence of a director, interested faculty members issued a resolution that an interim director be appointed while the search continued for a director.[10] The administration concurred, and the search lasted several months.

In June 1972 Lorenzo Martin, an Afro-American raised in Chicago, was appointed. He held a baccalaureate degree in history from the University of Illinois and a master's degree from Loyola University. Prior to his appointment at Prairie State College he had taught for several years in the Chicago public schools and city college system with much experience in curriculum development. "We were able to hire," stated the president, "a director who ... is an excellent educator ... a man who is committed ... to give ... direction and guidance to minority students."[11]

Upon his arrival at Prairie State College Martin was "appalled but not shocked that so few [black students] were graduating [and] that many of them were not even finishing their courses. They were dropping out at mid-year ... only to re-enter the next semester, and it was sort of a merry-go-round, which disturbed me because it was a waste of our natural resources and their mental resources ... their futures were being just stagnated."[12] Retention of black students and other minorities was, indeed, the main problem for Martin.

Part of the problem in Martin's estimation was due to the organization of Black Studies as a separate program rather than one based on academic pursuit and integrated in an inter-disciplinary approach. "I always opted," he stated, "for an inter-disciplinary arrangement in terms of courses, in terms of faculty under a coordinatorship."[13] The Black Studies program became an inter-disciplinary program. Black Studies courses were shifted to various departments throughout the college under supervision of the Social Science department.[14]

With the increase in the Hispanic population in the early 1970s, Mexican-American students became concerned about courses at PSC relating to their ethnic origins. A course in Mexican-American history was approved in January 1973.[15] As with Black Studies, the approach was inter-disciplinary between the foreign language and history departments.

Providing for Community Education Needs

Besides providing for personal and individual education needs, the mission of a community college is to provide for community education needs. Throughout the early 1970s Prairie State College carried out this mission by adding many programs, especially in the occupational and technical area.

In April 1959, only a few months after opening, Prairie State College instituted a basic management program in cooperation with a local auto manufacturer. Gradually other courses in the vocational and technical fields were added. In the late 1960s, however, the number of these programs increased noticeably. Between 1969 and 1972 the number of students with majors in the vocational curricula increased from 22 percent to 46 percent. By 1972 the college had developed 40 one and two-year occupational programs.[16]

Between 1970 and 1975 at least 13 programs in the occupational and technical area were added. For example, in 1971, Automotive Technology, Finance and Credit Management, and Air, Water, Wastewater Control Technology programs were approved. In 1972 Labor Studies and Structural Drafting Technology programs were adopted. In 1973 several certificate programs were approved, including Police Science, Electronic Technology, Drafting Technology, Automotive Services, Clerk-Stenographer and Clerk-

Typist. In 1974 certificate programs were approved in Teacher Aide and Child Development areas and in 1975 a program in Industrial Supervision and Management was adopted.[17] Prairie State College, indeed, was no longer primarily a transfer-oriented institution. It was moving toward more occupational and technical programs.

The procedure for adopting these programs to meet community education needs was essentially the same as that for adopting personal and individual education needs. For individual needs the college identified the needs and arranged a program for meeting them. For community education needs, however, the community identified the needs.

An Advisory Committee was formed to plan a program. After a program was prepared, approval was needed from three places. Approval from the Illinois Community College Board meant that the program was eligible for state funding. After the College Curriculum Committee approved the program it was submitted to the administration and trustees for adoption.

The Transportation program, adopted in May 1970, is one example of how the college met community education need. The need for trained personnel existed in the transportation industry in southern Cook County and northwestern Indiana. This region was a huge transportation hub with truck lines, barge lines, boat lines and hundreds of railroads calling for employees. Fred J. Meyer, a railroad vice president, along with truck entrepreneurs and other laymen leaders in the transportation industry sensed the need and formed an advisory committee to explore what employers look for in employees hired for transportation jobs.[18]

In developing the curriculum, the advisory committee drew upon the College of Advance Traffic which was located in the Chicago Loop and trained transportation professionals for employment in Chicago. However, prospective students in the southern suburbs were discouraged from commuting to the city in the evening for training after working all day in the suburbs. So, the advisory committee replicated the curriculum of the College of Advance Traffic. The program adopted consisted of 10 courses exceeding the transportation offerings of large state universities in the Midwest. The advisory committee wanted to present a broad range of general training rather than specialize in one aspect of transportation.[19] The Transportation program thrived for many years.

The Industrial Supervision and Management program, adopted in May 1975, provides another example of program adoption to meet community education needs in the occupational and technical area. Again initiative came from the local community, this time a steel company.

To revise its management organization at its plant in Chicago Heights the steel company had obtained the consultant services of a Purdue professor, Charles H. Creasser, who was conducting an industrial supervision program for Indiana State University at Fort Wayne, Ind. Impressed with the feasibility of such a program for the Chicago Heights industrial community, the steel company and the Manufacturers Association of Chicago Heights prevailed upon the Prairie State College administration to seek the services of the Purdue consultant in establishing a similar program.[20]

With the Manufacturers Association of Chicago Heights Educational Committee serving as the Advisory Committee and with the consultant providing expertise, two programs, focusing on the needs of the local industrial community were designed. One was a certificate program and the other was a two-year program leading to the Associate of Applied Science degree in Industrial Supervision and Management.[21]

Like the Transportation program the Industrial Supervision and Management program grew in enrollment and thrived. Besides serving industrial plants, modified programs were extended to banks, hospitals and other businesses.[22]

The college also cooperated with the Federal Government. An example of this was the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program (CETA) adopted in January 1975.

In an attempt to deal with the economic recession of 1973-74 the federal government launched the CETA program to enable people to pay rent and put food on the table, and to provide systematic entry into a job market for the hard-core unemployed.[23] Title I of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (Public Law 93-203) provided for college participation, stating that the "program shall include the development and creation of job opportunities and the training, education and other services needed to enable individuals to secure and retain employment at their maximum capacity."[24]

Initially, the Prairie State College CETA program focused on senior citizens. Thirteen were enrolled, including 11 females; the males averaged 61.6 years of age and the females 72.5 years.[25] The program expanded to include minorities and younger people. In 1975 there were 24 people enrolled including 16 females; 14 blacks, two Hispanics and eight whites.[26]

These are examples of well-planned programs. Unfortunately, not all programs were well prepared. The Mental Health and Social Aide programs overlapped. The Air Water, Waste-water Control Technology program was launched without full study and limped along.[27] To succeed, a program required thorough planning to meet a need.

Thus during the early 1970s Prairie State College moved along among the leaders in providing educational services. In doing this it was actually in the vanguard in providing remedial services and helping to identify another mission of the community college. At the same time the college responded promptly to community education needs by providing programs in the occupational and technical area.

Accountability: Accreditation and Certification

Establishing educational programs is one thing, but maintaining them at acceptable standards is another. This ongoing task proved difficult for Prairie State College during the early 1970s in terms of institutional accreditation, the transfer mission of the college, and the Dental programs.

Several accrediting agencies exist in the country to establish standards for educational institutions as a whole. In the Upper Midwest the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools establishes and maintains these standards. To be approved all institutions of higher learning in this region must meet levels of acceptance. All four-year colleges and universities are expected to meet prescribed standards as are all community colleges expected to meet their measures. Otherwise, credits earned and degrees conferred are not recognized. To insure that acceptable levels are maintained, the North Central Association conducts periodic visitations.

In 1965 the North Central Association granted Prairie State College (then Bloom Community College) full accreditation for a three-year period. The association affirmed the transfer of this accreditation from Bloom Community College to Prairie State in 1968 with the provision that the college undergo a review visit within four years. The association also required that an annual progress report be submitted regarding several concerns. These included the development of faculty-administrative relationships in policy matters, "especially as such planning relates to programs and services for minority groups."[28] Furthermore the association advised that "progress reports should also be addressed to the clarification of the administration of the institution's community service efforts and the means of choosing second echelon leadership with attention to the inbreeding at this level."[29] Another recommendation urged that the college utilize the services of a North Central Association consultant to assist in overcoming these weaknesses.

The association accepted annual progress reports, but the 1972 visitation proved more rigorous. Accreditation was continued but on "private probation."[30] The association "further voted to recommend that the college utilize the services of a consultant or consultants in the area of union-administration-board relationships, finance, and general organizational structure and that a reexamination be scheduled in three years."[31]

Most serious was the college's financial plight. "It is necessary," the report read, "for all who are associated with Prairie State College to understand that the college is in a serious financial condition. This situation needs to be examined in depth by all concerned: faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees. There needs to be acceptance of the mutual responsibility for improving the situation, including the acceptance of unaccustomed restraints, reorganization, reduction of services, retrenchment generally."[32]

There were compounding factors. "This unhealthy financial situation," the report continued, "is aggravated by a large proportion of small classes and a disproportionate number of department heads who are released from some teaching responsibilities but who have small departments--some with as few as two to six faculty. There is also a surplus of administrators in some areas."[33]

Another source of real concern was the adversary relationship between the administration and the faculty. "Distrust has been increased recently," the report read, "because the faculty appear to feel that there is a lack of communication between them and the administration and an absence of faculty involvement in matters affecting faculty welfare."[34] The reviewers, however, did not feel that the faculty was blameless. "At the same time, however, the faculty themselves," the report continued, "have not developed the potential educational leadership inherent in a faculty. Rather, their most obvious concerns, as expressed through the union, appear to cluster around reduced loads, more convenient class schedules, and more pay."[35]

Not all, however, was negative in the report. Instruction, though essentially traditional, did present some exciting and challenging learning experiences in art, speech, theater and in some history classes and special programs. The Learning Center impressed the visitors with the audio-tutorial laboratory for history students and the reading laboratory for the remedial program. "The library collection," the report indicated, "compares favorably with collections in many other community colleges of approximately the same size [and] the library is adequately staffed by qualified people."[36]

Putting it bluntly, the report represented a reprieve rather than a strong vote of confidence. The college remained accredited but much needed to be done before the next visitation in three years.

This was an institutional crisis. Without full accreditation the college would lose its reason for existence. Again, all parts of the institution put aside acrimony and petty differences and went to work in preparation for the next accreditation visit. Trustees, administration, faculty and supportive staff formed sub-groups and put together a self-study that consumed hours and hours of hard work.[a] It was another of the college's finer hours. In March 1975 the North Central Association removed private probation and granted the college accreditation for another three years.[37]

There remained several areas of concern. First of these was financing. Although the institution had arrived at budget stabilization, this area was still tenuous, the report pointed out. Then there was the matter of short tenure for chief administrators since four presidents had served the college in less than nine years. And communication between different segments of the college, especially administration and faculty, remained strained.[38] The report indicated, however, that the faculty was less united in its opposition to the administration than in the past. "It appears," the report stated, "that a number of faculty continue to harbor some doubts regarding many aspects of administration and Board of Trustee procedures ... [but] there are other faculty groups that would contest this position, feeling that the administrative team is doing its job. They point out that the institution has been turned around during the last several years as to interpersonal relationships, communications, enrollment and budget stability."[39] And the report went on to score the faculty. "Generally," the report stated, "the faculty seemed more concerned than dedicated."[40]

Besides the overall institutional standards set by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, there were programs and parts of the educational services of the college which needed approval of other agencies. Among these was the Liberal Arts and Science program which required sanction of the Illinois Community College Board.

One of the several missions of a community college is to provide transfer programs, or courses that parallel those offered at the freshman and sophomore level at senior colleges. They consist essentially of liberal arts and science offerings which transfer to a four-year college and apply toward a baccalaureate degree. Another purpose of these transfer programs, however, is to meet the personal educational goals of individuals who do not seek transfer credit. In any case it is the responsibility of the ICCB to approve transfer programs of Illinois community colleges to qualify for state funding.

The transfer program provoked a controversy between the ICCB and the college during the early 1970s. This argument rested on an interpretation of the transfer program in the community college. Essentially there were two interpretations: strict and loose.

Strict interpretation took the position that all transfer courses ought to be articulated closely with curriculum of four-year colleges. That is, a student who expected to major in a particular subject ought to take essentially the same courses at Prairie State College that he would take at the four-year college to which he expected to transfer and qualify for the baccalaureate degree. This interpretation viewed the transfer program as a "multiple baccalaureate oriented program" consisting of a curricula for each major.[41] This view held that a history major would take different courses at the freshman-sophomore level than a science major but both would earn an associate degree.

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[a] President Ashley Johnson stated that this cooperative effort was one of the most rewarding accomplishments of his administration. "I think there could be much attributed to the achieving of full accreditation as the result of all of the work [of] those people." OHTI, Ashley L. Johnson.

Loose interpretation or the "single baccalaureate oriented"[42] view took the position that specialization in the freshman and sophomore years was hardly proper in the transfer program. Besides a few required courses many others could be used as electives. This provided more flexibility for students to choose from a larger range of electives and still win an Associate in Arts or Applied Science degree.

Both types of programs were acceptable to the Illinois Community College Board but the board urged Prairie State College to adopt the multiple baccalaureate-oriented program. Main reason for this preference was that the state board saw threats to its own authority and prospects of legal questions. "The Illinois Junior College Board staff," wrote the executive secretary, "and some members of the Illinois Board of Higher Education staff are concerned with the identification of a single baccalaureate-oriented program. We see the possibility that this may be bringing about an abdication of state program approval procedure and the legal responsibilities of the ICCB to approve each major and curricula in any field of instruction and the responsibility of the Board of Higher Education to approve new units of instruction. It also has some implications under the legislation to chargebacks relative to implementation of that part of the law."[43]

Prairie State College, however, argued for a single baccalaureate program. "It is our contention," wrote the president, "that the baccalaureate degree-oriented student should have multiple options from which to choose in pursuing the baccalaureate degree. Essentially, we feel that within the scope of transfer credit courses offered at Prairie State and under proper guidance and counseling, a program can be created for a student to allow him to complete the lower division work within a baccalaureate degree program."[44] He continued, "Our system, we feel, provides for flexibility and change and is administratively less costly and time consuming. It is not the obligation of the community college to create baccalaureate degree programs...[45] Furthermore, a single baccalaureate program would be more realistic to a large number of students who took the transfer program but did not transfer to a four-year college baccalaureate program. "Nationally," he wrote, "about 15 percent of the community college students transfer to the four-year or senior institution. At Prairie State College, it is about 13 percent. Certainly, we must direct our attention and services to this group, but through a system that provides for exploration, choice and change."[46]

In its position Prairie State College was not alone. Several other community colleges including Black Hawk, Illinois Central, College of Lake County, and Southeastern Illinois College, favored the single baccalaureate program.[47]

Since the ICCB offered each college the choice of identifying a single or multiple baccalaureate-oriented program, Prairie State College was granted its choice. Approval, however, took some pleading and much communication.[48]

About this time the appropriateness of the baccalaureate program became a source of concern outside the system itself. Because of the significant increase in occupational technical programs at the community college level, sentiment was expressed that perhaps the baccalaureate programs should be taken out of the community colleges and offered only at four-year institutions.

The issue caught Governor Walker somewhat off-guard. Early in 1974 the governor conducted a series of accountability sessions in connection with his administration. At one of these sessions held at Thornton Community College, Doris Hill, a Prairie State College trustee, asked the governor for his reaction to reported indications that the Board of Higher Education might recommend that the baccalaureate-oriented programs be offered only at four-year institutions, shifting from the original intent of the community college mission as outlined in the Public Junior College act of 1965. The governor replied that there would be no change until after a complete study of the situation by the board.[49]

That the Board of Higher Education was even contemplating such a move caused a furor of concern among community college circles. The governor was compelled to respond. "By no means," the governor wrote, "did I intend to suggest that liberal arts, baccalaureate programs and community service programs be discontinued or de-emphasized; rather I was reaffirming the already established mission of community colleges for providing leadership in vocational education. If I chose the wrong words in the midst of the fast-paced back-and-forth dialogue that occurs at these accountability session, I very much regret it."[50] The movement never reached the action stage.

In the midst of resolving the type of baccalaureate program that Prairie State College would offer, this program became affected by the decision of the Board of Higher Education that physical education courses be entirely voluntary.[51] Prior to 1972 Illinois colleges required eight hours of physical education for a baccalaureate degree. Thus four hours were required for an associate degree as part of general education requirements, and these four hours were funded by the state. However, physical education hours for physical education majors and minors and for teacher education majors and minors who needed physical education for certification, would still be funded by the state.[52]

For Prairie State College these changes affected the Physical Education department faculty. This meant a decrease in the number of hours produced and thus the number of teachers needed.[53]

Besides the North Central Association for overall institutional accreditation and the ICCB sanction for most programs, other agencies established standards of accountability for other programs, especially in the health area. Certification for the Nursing program came from the National League of Nursing while certification for the dental programs (Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene) came from the American Dental Association Council on Dental Education.[54]

Health programs were a priority in Illinois higher education during the 1960s and 1970s and these programs became widely adopted at the community college level. Prairie State College was again in the vanguard having established the first Dental Assisting program at a community college in 1961. The Dental Hygiene program began in 1967. Additional funds were appropriated. The State Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation reclassified approved health occupational programs as manpower priority programs and provided additional funding of 30 percent of base for the 1971 fiscal year.[55]

When it became apparent that Prairie State College dental programs would lose their accreditation early in 1972 there was serious concern.

In 1971 the American Dental Association Council on Dental Education visited the campus and found that there had not been much progress or change since the program began. Inter-department personal relations had broken down between the two dental programs, and concern had spread among students and parents on the quality of instruction and student performance on national examinations. Exacerbating the problem was an alienation which had grown in recent years between the college and the accrediting council.[56] Conditions called for an immediate appraisal.

The administration came forth with a bold plan to address the problem. The first consideration was to avoid loss of accreditation which seemed inevitable at the end of the spring semester. The plan consisted of three steps. First, the Dental Assisting program, essentially a one-year certificate program, would be deactivated for one year.[57] Second, the director of the dental programs would be terminated and a successor named to "fully develop Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene curriculums that are of the highest possible quality and acceptable by the Council on Dental Education.[58] Third, the director would assume the basic responsibility for a Dental Hygiene program during 1972-73, and, if necessary, contract through a dental school in the area for this program which would be offered within the college's own dental facility.[59] The college appointed member of the Dental Hygiene faculty, Mrs. Virginia C. Stankiewicz, to direct the program.[60] The task of redeveloping the program could begin with the fall semester and be presented to the council in December for accreditation. It was, indeed, a daring proposal.

No sooner had the plan to save the dental programs been announced than there came a howl of protest from union officials. If adopted, the plan would eliminate eight full-time teachers.[61] The trustees, however, placed the standing of the college ahead of the protest, and the plan went forward.

Under Stankiewicz's skilled leadership and the cooperation of the entire dental staff, the dental programs were saved within a few months. In this short time significant progress was made and, on the basis of her voluntary progress report, the Council on Dental Education on 8 November 1974 "adopted a resolution to raise the accreditation status of the dental hygiene program from 'provisional approval' to 'conditional approval,'" meaning that deficiencies or weaknesses existed but they were considered of such a nature that they could be corrected in a period not to exceed two years.[62]

Thus, accountability did not come easy for Prairie State College. But accountability is seldom easy to manage.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

GETTING ALONG WITH THE SYSTEM AND NEIGHBORS

After phenomenal growth in the late 1960s the Illinois community college system was essentially completed by 1971 with 39 districts and 52 campuses. The task for the remainder of the 1970s shifted from growth to consolidation. There remained, however, about 10 percent of the state without a community college. Communities within these non-college areas provided attractive prizes for college districts seeking their annexation. Beecher, Ill., was the source of much contention between Prairie State, Kankakee and Joliet community colleges, all seeking Beecher's annexation.

Functioning Within the Illinois Community College System, 1970-75

The rapid growth of new Illinois public community colleges subsided with the advent of the 1970s. By 1973 the system was essentially completed in terms of number of colleges and campuses established. As the system neared completion priorities shifted, and this affected relationships between the various segments within the system.

These shifts affected Prairie State College and the college provided leadership in adjusting to these turns. Phenomenal is perhaps the most appropriate way to describe the growth of the Illinois public community college movement during the 1960s. In that decade 22 colleges were established. The pace of growth was especially rapid during the last four years of the decade when 14 colleges were founded. The system included 37 districts comprising 50 colleges in 1970. Thirty-five of these districts had one college, albeit most of them had extension centers, and four districts were multi-college. Chicago had nine colleges, Illinois Eastern had four and Black Hawk and DuPage had two colleges each.

When the 1970s began, 80 percent of the territory and 90 percent of the population of Illinois was in a community college district. Establishment of Lewis and Clark and Richland colleges in 1971 completed the system bringing the total of districts to 39, comprising 52 campuses.[1] Illinois was indeed among the leading states in the country in the development of community colleges in the 1960s and early 1970s.

With the system of junior colleges firmly established throughout the state there remained a few refinements to be made in regulations governing the system. The Public Community College Act (Public Act 78-669) of 10 September 1973 essentially modified The Public Junior College Act of 1965 which provided for the development of a statewide public junior college system.[2]

Perhaps the most noteworthy modification was the change from "junior" to "community" college. The law also removed any ambivalence as to the precise position of community colleges in the Illinois educational structure. The 1965 law placed community colleges in the Illinois higher education structure, but the statutes governing them remained in the School Code, which governs elementary and secondary public schools. The 1973 law, however, removed the community colleges entirely from the public schools code and assured their place in the Illinois higher education community.[3]

The law also spelled out procedures for incorporation of non-college districts into college districts, and procedures were outlined for disconnection of areas from existing college districts.[4]

There were, however, no changes in the fundamental structure of the community college system. The Board of Higher Education remained the "Board of Boards" over the five boards (one of which was the Community College Board) which served as trustees for all the public colleges in Illinois. Under the Illinois Community College Board were the 39 public community colleges locally controlled by boards of trustees. Trustees were elected in 37 of these districts. In two districts trustees were appointed. In Chicago the mayor appointed the trustees and in the State Community College of East St. Louis the governor appointed the trustees.[5]

By 1973 the Illinois community college system was firmly established. During the next decade no colleges were added to the system or dissolved.

Completion of the community college system came as no surprise. It had been planned for more than a decade. The original Master Plan for Higher Education called for three phases which would take Illinois higher education into the 1980s. Phase One was to establish a statewide community college system. Phase Two was meant to establish health programs and the creation of five four-year state universities to serve as capstones for the burgeoning community college system. These five colleges, however, were reduced to two (Governors State in 1969 and Sangamon State in 1970) because the private colleges viewed construction of several public colleges as a threat.[6] Thus by 1973 Phase One and a part of Phase Two of the Master Plan were completed as planned.

Completion of the community college system, planned and expected as it was, nevertheless brought about a shift in the relationship of community colleges to Illinois higher education and to the planning for these colleges. Main priority of the Master Plan for Higher Education was the establishment of a statewide public community college system. Community colleges received a major portion of consideration in funding and their development was emphasized. However, with the completion of the system, community colleges, rather than being the favorite child as they had been for nearly a decade, became just another member of the family. They were no longer first among equals.

This change of status also brought about a change in planning direction for the community college system. Throughout the 1960s planning was predicated on expansion and development; but with completion of the system the emphasis turned to consolidation and coordination of the system.

In the past, master plans for the public community colleges emphasized site development and proposed buildings. In future master plans the direction turned to philosophies and objectives, geographical areas to be served, educational needs of the region, proposed programs and services and projected enrollments.[7] Fred L. Wellman when taking the position of executive secretary of the community college system in 1970, emphasized this tack. "When I took over," he said, "I suppose my main task was refining, reforming and providing more complete planning...I suppose my task was mainly that of a planner."[8] According to Albert H. Martin, an original associate secretary, programs came under closer scrutiny as the 1970s arrived. "Recognition of programs became more difficult," he stated, "After the first two or three years things were more difficult to evaluate. I felt the ICCB was turning into a police board.' The colleges were going to have to cross their Ts and dot their Is."[9]

Planning would continue, to be sure, but the direction and priorities would be different. Rather than advocating community colleges, especially in the lobbying halls of the General Assembly, the direction would turn to regulation and consolidation of the system as a whole.

This shift in emphasis had a great effect upon Prairie State College and the other colleges within the system. The community colleges were no longer a main consideration in the overall planning of the Board of Higher Education, and this raised concern among member colleges. They thought they might be put aside and left to take care of themselves, especially in funding and other measures involving the General Assembly. They feared that they might have to become more their own advocates than rely on the Board of Higher Education which had pleaded their case for the last decade.

The emphasis on planning raised a second concern for member colleges. Planning required much data which would be forthcoming from the colleges within the system. Steps in this direction were already underway.

In 1970 the Board of Higher Education requested information from all higher education institutions "in order to properly assess the supply of, and demand for, academic manpower to the year 1980."[10] In 1971 Prairie State College received requests for "priority lists of programs that could be eliminated or reduced in order to cut the state support revenues."[11] And in 1973 a long-range master plan was launched for higher education in the state to be submitted by 1975.[12] Prairie State College had no intention of not cooperating in providing data, but the concern was that planning might take too much precedence over the hard issues of economics and state aid needed to sustain the college.

Besides the Board of Higher Education, community colleges had many advocates throughout the 1960s. The Illinois Association of Junior colleges had been one to plead their case. In addition to providing data and recommendations which led to the creation of the junior college system, this organization had lobbied long and hard in the halls of the General Assembly for the junior college cause and not without results. By 1970, however, the organization was fragmented, consisting of several separate groups of trustees, presidents, faculty and students.[13]

A movement began to disband the organization. Initiative for this movement came largely from trustees of the community colleges. The issue came to a head in May 1970 at the annual meeting of the IAJC in Peoria. The need for increased state financial support for community colleges, mounting construction problems, student militancy, faculty welfare and bargaining pressures and the threat to local autonomy made it urgent that the community colleges themselves organize to protect and promote their own interests, the trustee division argued. Thus the convention ended in disarray and on 17 July 1970 the organizational headquarters in Chicago closed.[14]

Determined to establish a more viable organization, 13 trustees of Illinois public community colleges, including Shirley R. Mellecker of Prairie State College, gathered at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, 15 August 1970 and founded the Illinois Community College Trustees Association.[15] Purpose of the organization as stated in the constitution was "to advance the community college system in the State of Illinois, to promote development and support of community colleges in the State of Illinois, and to foster cooperation and communication among its members."[16] The association quickly became a force in the Illinois educational scene. Among the first steps was to employ a lobbying and consulting firm. Dinners were sponsored for trustees to meet with state legislators and to impress upon the lawmakers that community college trustees desired involvement in legislative matters.[17]

The ICCTA soon became the strongest community college lobbying group in the state.[18] After a decade the organization evaluated itself and presented a balanced view of its successes, failures and mixed results.

Successes included recodifying the Public Community College Act (1973); publication of a legislative digest; promotion of a positive image to the legislature; cooperative staff work with the legislature; a continuance of a strong working relationship with the Illinois Community College Board; support of a comprehensive curricular focus; development and presentation of workshops; and publication of an educational, informational newsletter.[19]

Among its failures were areas where it did not have major influence, including working relations with the Board of Higher Education; clarification of construction practices and policies with the Capital Development Board; impact on Phase Four of the Master Plan; development of a comprehensive public relations program; and passage of legislation allowing student board members.[20] In three areas the association felt there were mixed results, including efforts at funding, efforts to include all common school districts into a community college district and positive relationships with the Office of the Governor.[21]

The strength of the ICCTA in advocating community college interests was echoed by Prairie State College trustees. "The effectiveness, I feel," stated one, "was very pervasive throughout the state in that this gave all of us trustees the chance to talk to each other and to share our frustrations and successes and to learn of other successes. It helped to give a measuring stick of what was going on in your own locale." She said further, "The significant accomplishments I think were very much that we became a very effective political force to bring the legislators the real needs of the community college system, not only financial but of organizational strengths and organizational needs and we were able to bring to their attention how their particular actions in the legislature affected the state as a whole."[22]

Besides working at the state level through the ICCTA, Prairie State College trustees also worked with legislators at the local level. Community colleges as a whole have the broadest base of support in the General Assembly because each college district has its own local representatives. In cooperation with other community colleges in the region, Prairie State hosted dinners for state legislators with positive results. "Our local legislators did very well," stated a trustee. "We made it very much our business to make sure that they knew precisely how each bill that was introduced would affect Prairie State College and we monitored them very carefully."[23]

In addition to participating in advocacy for community colleges at the state and local level., Prairie State College provided leadership in establishing guidelines for gathering information needed in master planning. To draft long-range plans the Illinois Community College Board required large amounts of data from the member colleges. These requests frequently became confused and tenuous without regard to funding costs in supplying the information. These requests sometimes were met with strong opposition from local college trustees. Reason for opposition was largely the lack of system and guidelines in the requests.

In one case the Management Information System Policy Advisory Committee of the Illinois Community College Board sought a large amount of information which met with so much opposition that the ICCTA passed a resolution not to cooperate unless a system of guidelines was prescribed. The result was a committee composed of members of the Community College Board, the ICCTA, the State Fiscal Economic Commission and the

Board of Higher Education. To chair the committee Prairie State College Trustee James H. Griffith was appointed. After five years of concentrated effort a system was designed to facilitate the obtaining of information for long-term planning.[24]

Functioning With Non-College-District Neighbors

By the middle 1970s less than 10 percent of Illinois remained unincorporated in a community college district, but the location of these areas led to strained relations between existing college districts touching their borders and the unincorporated districts themselves. Prairie State College encountered such discord with Kankakee Community College and Beecher High School District 200-U during the early part of the decade.

Beecher, a prosperous agrarian region in eastern Will county, owed its origins to German immigration the early 19th century. For more than a century it remained strongly Protestant and largely Lutheran in its religious persuasion. In the early 1970s the population barely exceeded 2,000. Formation of the Beecher School District in 1951 gave the community something of an official definition of size and boundary. Geographical limits of the district beyond the village itself, included all of Washington Township and the eastern third of Will Township, comprising an area of 58 square miles. The district extends approximately eight and one half miles from east to west and six miles from north to south. In the early 1970s the assessed evaluation was $23 million. Although the village provides the majority of students in the public schools there are those who attend from five miles outside the village.[25]

The effort to include the entire state of Illinois in a community college district thrust Beecher District 200-U into an intra-community and inter-community-college struggle in the early 1970s. This came about when the 77th General Assembly enacted Public Act 77-1822 (certified 11 May 1972). Essentially this law amended the original Junior College Act (1965), whereby areas not included in a junior college district could either establish a new district or annex to an existing district by 1 August 1974.[26]

This law had special relevance to small districts like Beecher. During the first seven years the district's junior college students attended Joliet Junior College, approximately 28 miles northwest. Most junior college students, however, began to attend Bloom Community College when that institution opened in 1958. When Kankakee Community College opened in 1966 a few Beecher students enrolled there, approximately 25 miles to the southwest.

Public Act 77-1822 confronted the Beecher School trustees with a difficult decision. For nearly two decades the district had provided junior college education for its graduates by allowing them to enroll in the junior college of their choice--Bloom, Joliet or Kankakee--with Beecher providing tuition payments out of its education fund. The act, however, pressured the district to establish its own college or annex to an existing college.

As trustees and guardians for the education of their students the board members were clear on their first responsibility and it was not going to be easy to carry out. Their main consideration was what would be best for Beecher students. Neither choice seemed attractive.

The first option, creating its own college district, seemed out of the question because of huge financial costs involved for such a small district. Annexation, the second choice, seemed more feasible but also presented complications. Annexation could lead to heavy pressure from outside sources in the three contiguous community college districts tearing the Beecher community into various factions and leaving the community divided no matter how the annexation proceeded.

Adding to this outside pressure was the assessed evaluation of the Beecher district which would enhance the financial strength of the college district that annexed Beecher. The main consideration should have been what was best for the Beecher community college students, but this was less of a motivating factor to the three community colleges than the boost in resources which annexation of Beecher would give them. Thus, it is quite understandable that the community colleges involved assumed that the interests of the students would be best served by annexing to their district.[a]

Between December 1973 and October 1974 annexation essentially came down to a contest between Prairie State College and Kankakee. Joliet on the other hand had been enrolling a few Beecher students in its agricultural program since the district was established, but it never contested strongly for the annexation of the Beecher district. Distance was a large factor since Joliet was the furthest of the three. Prairie State College and Kankakee, however, vied strenuously to annex Beecher to their districts.

Each college presented its case based on several factors. Prairie State College stressed the fact that more students from Beecher attended it than attended either Kankakee or Joliet. In the past three-year period 65 students attended Prairie State compared to seven for Kankakee. In terms of tax levies, the 22.7 cent-rate for the Gophers was more favorable than 28.7 cents at Kankakee. Furthermore, Prairie State College, 15 miles from Beecher, was much closer than either Kankakee, 30 miles away, or Joliet, a distance of 45 miles. Recent population shifts southward tended to bring Beecher closer to Prairie State College than either of the other two institutions. Beecher students at one time had attended Bloom High School, and business interests were closer to communities in the north. Furthermore, Governors State University, designed as a capstone to the region's community college, was north.[27]

Kankakee Community College had its case. Its main point was that Kankakee was much stronger financially than Prairie State College which had failed to pass three tax referenda and continued to operate with a $650,000 deficit "which they have no plans to eliminate," while Kankakee had operated in the black ever since the college was founded.[28] Kankakee argued that it had completed the first two phases of its program while Prairie State had finished only 12,000 square feet of a proposed 250,000 square-foot project. Kankakee, furthermore, owned 177 acres on which to expand while Prairie State had only 120 acres. Distance was not that great a factor, Kankakee argued, because the driving time was about equal due to superior roads between Kankakee and Beecher. Tax rates and tuition offset each other, Kankakee stated. If Kankakee had higher tax rates, Prairie State College had higher tuition.[29]

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[a] James M. Troutman, vice president for business affairs at Prairie State College in 1983, estimated that annexation of the Beecher district would produce tax revenue exceeding the amount of chargeback funds for tuition from Beecher students by approximately $40,000 a year.

Joliet Junior College did not enter actively into the fracas. However, its agricultural and animal husbandry programs continued to attract a few students each year to this oldest junior college in the country.

For 11 months beginning in December 1973 Prairie State College and Kankakee Community College confronted each other feverishly for annexation of Beecher District 200-U. Caught in the middle and torn between the two, Beecher decided to annex to Kankakee for a brief period but soon agreed with Mercutio, "a plague o' both your houses" (*Romeo and Juliet*, III. i), took advantage of a statutory provision and returned to its original status of independence.

The Beecher annexation issue began to take shape when the Illinois Community College board drafted a statewide master plan aimed to comply with the intention of the General Assembly to have all of the state included in a community college district. The ICCB, in a preliminary draft of this statewide plan, released on 5 December 1973, recommended that the Beecher district be included in the Prairie State College district. "The staff," the report stated, "has recommended annexation of this territory to Prairie State rather than Kankakee because: (1) the Beecher district is somewhat closer to the Prairie State campus than it is to the Kankakee campus; (2) the nature of the south Chicago suburban growth," it continued, "suggests that the Beecher district will soon become a natural extension of the Prairie State district and that the affinities of the Beecher area will tend to become more northerly than southerly directed and, (3) there is more need for growth in the Prairie State district than in the Kankakee district."[30] The Illinois Community College Advisory Committee also recommended that Beecher annex to Prairie State College.[31]

Despite its recommendation, on 14 December 1973 the ICCB voted that Beecher annex to Kankakee Community College. The ICCB evidently made its new recommendation on the basis of a questionnaire mailing which was done by a Citizens' Committee. The results were announced about the time that the ICCB recommendation was released. This questionnaire showed that Beecher residents favored annexation to the Kankakee district.

A pamphlet which accompanied the questionnaire contained many factual errors and half-truths involving the annexation issue. Furthermore, Prairie State College was not given an opportunity to supply information to the voters. Besides the questionnaire and pamphlet the Beecher area was deluged with newspaper and direct mail advertising pleading the Kankakee College case, a practice opposed by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association to which all community college trustees belong. The heavy return of questionnaires itself was questionable since 406 more questionnaires were received than the total number of voters casting ballots in the last school board election in Beecher.[32]

The tempo of the Beecher annexation accelerated and increased. In view of statutory requirements calling for a hearing prior to annexation, the action of the ICCB seemed rather precipitous. Many citizens in Beecher held this view and urged that a hearing be scheduled.[33] Not surprisingly Prairie State College trustees, feeling that they had been deceived, held the same view. The board adopted a motion "to assist interested residents of the Beecher area to secure a hearing in their district before representatives of the Illinois Community College Board on the question as to which community college district Beecher will be annexed, and providing them with necessary legal information and petitions."[34]

In the face of the furor which followed the recommendation for annexation of Beecher to Kankakee and realizing the need for complying with statutory requirements, Beecher trustees and the ICCB moved to set a date for a hearing. Presenting a petition signed by 70 Beecher residents, the Beecher board requested the ICCB to arrange for a hearing, and a date was set for the evening of 15 May 1974.[35] The Beecher gymnasium provided the hearing site.

For a Prairie State College vice president and a senior faculty member, enroute to the hearing, it was a pleasant auto ride down the old Vincennes Trail that provided the link between Forts Dearborn and Vincennes in the early 19th century. Now the route was known as Dixie Highway. It was picturesque in the early evening with a bright setting sun spreading long waves of light across the stables and grazing fields that punctuate the area around Balmoral, the race track that Matt J. [Colonel] Winn (1861-1949) purchased around the turn of the century after he had developed Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby. Just south of Crete the road passes Lincoln Fields where William H. (Jack) Dempsey (1895-1983) trained for his world championship boxing match which he lost in the legendary "long count" match against James J. (Gene) Tunney (1898-1978) a few miles north in Soldier Field on that warm, summer evening in 1927.

For the senior faculty member the hearing stirred recollections of perhaps the opening step in the annexation saga between Prairie State College and Beecher on 12 December 1966 when he and the chairman of the trustees met with the Beecher board to discuss prospects of Beecher one day seeking annexation to the community college to the north. That meeting was relaxing and cordial. That night the Beecher board demonstrated a sound understanding of the existing laws and conditions of the fledgling Illinois public junior college system.

Now 17 years later, except for one or two members of the Beecher board who remained at their posts, the cast of characters had changed. But the issues remained essentially the same. What would be Beecher's final decision? Was this sudden attempt to hasten annexation to Kankakee without a hearing really the final judgment? Or, would that judgment wait for more time and consideration?

Between 200 and 300 interested citizens from Beecher, members of the Beecher board, Prairie State College trustees and administrators, and Kankakee trustees and administrators attended with Fred L. Wellman, executive secretary of the Illinois Community College Board, as chairman. Events leading to the hearing were reviewed, and positions of the Beecher community, Kankakee Community College and Prairie State College were presented. Patrick A. Parisi, a practicing attorney and chairman of the Prairie State College trustees, presented the case for his institution, acknowledging instructions from the chairman with courtroom grace and elan evoking various reactions from the audience depending upon members' points of view and preference. Following each presentation the audience participated in discussion. Essentially there was no new evidence presented and the case remained unchanged. The hearing closed with no indication of what the ultimate decision would be.

Besides fulfilling statutory requirements, the hearing made it clear that the annexation of the Beecher district to Kankakee Community College was not a popular one. There were indications that many if not a majority opposed this status. The statutes provided a solution based on the democratic principle of voting, meaning a referendum.

Clear purpose of the 77th General Assembly was, indeed, to hasten the inclusion of the entire state of Illinois into community college districts. But in Public Act 77-1822, later incorporated into the Illinois Public Community College Act (Public Act 78-669), Governor Ogilvie utilized an "amendatory veto" to provide a means of protection for small communities like Beecher which might disapprove of an annexation. [b] This means was through a referendum where "such nondistrict territory shall not be annexed unless a majority of the votes cast on the question are in favor of annexation.[36] The Beecher School District 200-U chose this solution.

The decision came loud and clear on 5 October 1974 when Beecher School District 200-U held a referendum to decide if the district should remain in the Kankakee Community College district as recommended in December 1973. Remaining with Kankakee required a majority of votes. There were 356 no votes (69.6 percent) and 156 yes votes (30.6 per cent).[37] Thus, by a margin of nearly 7 to 3, the Beecher district decided not to annex to Kankakee but return to its original independent status.

This vote meant that Beecher High School graduates could enroll in any community college in Illinois and pay in-district fees.[38] Most, however, would continue to attend Prairie State College.

The decision could put a strain on the educational fund of the district to provide community college tuition for its high school graduates, but tuition for such a small number of graduates would be less than the added property taxation which would be assessed if the district annexed to an existing college district.

Not everybody was happy, including those in Beecher. But it was their decision. Here was another example of American dedication to education, moving along, complemented and facilitated by representative democracy.

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[b] An "amendatory veto" was incorporated in the 1970 Illinois Constitution. It allows the governor to return a bill to the house in which it originates with his objections to it and suggestions for changes. Governor Ogilvie wished to provide a means whereby a community in a community college district could separate or get out of a district. He invoked the amendatory veto to include this provision and the bill became a law. *Illinois Constitution*, Article IV, Section 9, Sub-section (e).

CHAPTER NINETEEN

ANOTHER ERA BEGINS

Under the leadership of Ashley L. Johnson the college resolved the persistent problems of acquiring land and constructing the permanent campus or main building. Strained faculty-administration relations were improved slightly. There were brief faculty strikes but with less rancor than the early work-stoppages. The college carried the outward appearance of more stability than during the late 1960s.

Thus it came as a surprise to the community when Johnson submitted his resignation early in 1975. Underneath the outward appearance of stability were dissonant chords. With a new campus nearing completion, the college approached another era, so the trustees accepted Johnson's resignation and selected another president.

A President Resigns

The departure of a college president is a notable event in the history of a college. Sometimes it takes place in a milieu of discord and represents frustrated leadership. At other times it comes as a surprise, takes place in a comparatively peaceful atmosphere and represents the ending of an era as when President Ashley L. Johnson suddenly announced his resignation at Prairie State College early in 1975.

As the year 1975 began, PSC seemed to be enjoying a rare, stable period. These tranquil times had been few since 1966 when it became an independent community college. Enrollment was growing, there was no teachers' strike, and the college community looked forward with an air of expectancy to opening the main building on the south campus in September. Thus, to most people in the college community it came as a surprise when President Johnson submitted his resignation to the trustees at a board meeting early in January 1975.[1]

In his resignation, which the board promptly accepted, Johnson stated that he was stepping down "for the benefit of my family and for the benefit of Prairie State College."[2] There were several factors which prompted his decision at this time. There were grounds to suspect that the decision was not as surprising as it seemed. At the board meeting when Johnson announced his resignation, the chairman indicated that "the Board and Mr. Johnson had discussed his resignation."[3]

Early in 1974, despite interminable delays brought about by cost over-rides, labor strikes and sub-contractor bankruptcies it appeared at long last that the main building could be occupied in the foreseeable future. Consequently the board began to think in this direction and envisioned that when the permanent campus was occupied the college would be moving into a new era, presenting new opportunities and problems. Besides the constant financial issue which would be greater with occupation of the new campus, there would be other new problems. This required a study of the present organizational structure and prospects for modifications which might be needed in the future.

Occupation of the new campus also required a hard look at present administrative personnel in terms of their qualification for meeting these new demands.[4] At this time relations between the trustees and the administration became more strained. Smooth relations between trustees and administration is an ideal that is hardly ever realized. A common cause of friction is the fundamental problem of avoiding the gray area between what is policy and what is administration and not crossing the line completely. Throughout Johnson's administration at least two board members from time to time moved into this area and came close to crossing the line in their enthusiasm to serve the district.[5] These incursions often led to serious disagreements between the trustees and administration.[6]

Throughout the early 1970s as the trustees surveyed the college two areas aroused their concern. First was the area of finances. As the board saw it, this area would become more difficult with occupation of the permanent building. The second area was Student Services. This region had been a concern since the college began, and the trustees saw the problems increasing with future development of the college in the permanent building.[7]

Thus as the calendar year 1974 moved toward conclusion, relations between the board and administration were not running as smoothly as they might have.

The president was aware that the board had several concerns when the trustees sat down with him to discuss college affairs.[8] The board asked the president to find other positions for the two vice-presidents, because they felt that they were not serving the college or his administration as well as they should be. With understandable loyalty, the president bridled at this request, holding that these were his associates and if the board was not satisfied with them then perhaps he should not serve as president.[9] The trustees generally concurred, but preferred that he remain as president for at least another year until a successor was found. Meanwhile, he could serve as a consultant to the new president through a year of transition.[10]

A rational and sensitive person, Johnson submitted himself to much introspection for several weeks as 1974 drew to a close. He could look back on his nearly five years as president of the college with much satisfaction. With his strong, outgoing nature, he had exercised his popularity to gain the cooperation of all facets of the college. His acquaintance and respect among community college administrators throughout the state did much to repair strained relations between the college and various accrediting agencies and to turn the institution around from its nadir during the summer of 1970. The financial problem remained, but under his administration a deficit approximating $1 million had been recovered and the budget balanced.

On the other hand, during recent months the presidency did not have quite the excitement that it had held during the first few years when he was establishing clear directions for his administration and asserting presidential leadership. At the outset of his administration he enjoyed strong support from the faculty which had recommended his appointment. He had seen this support slip away in the policy to remove department heads and replace them with coordinators. Much of this support, however, returned when no faculty were removed. "I often had to ask myself," he said, "if I was pleasing anybody."[11] Perhaps, he mused, a new era was at hand and a new leader would be more effective when the college moved to its main building. It would, indeed, be better for his family, because it would remove the pressure which had been building over the past several months. Serving as a consultant for his successor, however, was not attractive to him, and by resigning at once it would leave the trustees with more time to seek a new president. Thus, he made his decision and submitted his resignation at the first meeting of the board in 1975.

From the board's point of view, however, Johnson's separation from the college was not accomplished the way the board would have preferred. The trustees hoped that he would agree to step down but remain as a consultant in the transition to a new administration in the new building, during which time he could find a satisfactory appointment either with the college or elsewhere. The chairman stated that the board had no intention of dismissing Johnson. "The board has," he said, "the utmost respect for him and likes him a great deal as a person."[12] Unlike the separation of his predecessor, there was no rancor and bitterness expressed by either party. And there were no law suits.

Within a few weeks Vice President for Business Services Brian Knight submitted his resignation effective 30 June 1975.[13] Like Johnson, he too could look back on more than a decade of service to the college. He was the original business manager and he had handled the difficult business transactions in securing the property on which the main building was constructed. Moreover, he had managed the business details for construction of the main campus during which time he was faced with numerous problems of delay and frustration over which he had no control. Like Johnson, he too recognized that the college was entering a new era. And like Johnson he could see that this required new personnel with new approaches to new problems.

After a decade in a difficult position, it was time to step down and move elsewhere. He did, however, accept the board's appointment to serve as a consultant for the movement of equipment and occupation of the new building.

Transition and Finding a New President

During the first seven months of 1975 Prairie State College again found itself in a period of transition. For the administration there remained ongoing tasks involved with managing and operating the college. The trustees were busy because in addition to the usual policy-making problems, there was the responsibility of finding a new president and a vice president for Business Affairs. When August arrived both people had been appointed, and the college looked forward to a new era.

At least four problems drew much attention for the administration. None of them were new. It was like a broken record, more of the same, but they demanded serious consideration.

First was the permanent campus. Exterior construction for the main building was nearly completed during the spring of 1975 but much remained to be finished on the inside. Two issues involved with interior decorating evoked heated discussion. One of these was the gazebo. Original plans for the building included an auditorium but cost escalation demanded cutbacks. Thus the mall area was designed to meet two needs, a student lounge area and a location for theatrical and musical productions. To serve as a stage, a gazebo was designed.

The director of the Art department, after giving careful consideration to the proposal and design for the student lounge, stated his opinion. "I...feel," he said, "that it aesthetically does not contribute to a pleasing design for the area. With all due respect, it looks like a big 'fruit stand,' and its lighting suggests the 'Art Deco' period of the 1920s."[14] The Permanent Building Furnishings Committee also disapproved. "We feel," the committee stated, "that the permanency and inflexibility of the gazebo may inhibit the best use of the Student Commons area. The committee, therefore, unanimously recommends that the proposed design for the Student Commons area be deferred until the use patterns of the commons have been determined.[15]

Interior design provided another issue of contention. Originally, an interior design company suggested 20 streaming banners, three to five feet wide and 70 feet to 80 feet long, to be hung from the ceiling at the top of the fourth floor. This suggestion was declined. Paint colors for the third and fourth floors became a point of disagreement. Original colors were changed for some that added brightness to these hallways.[16] A glossy finish was chosen much to the consternation of a paint executive and member of the trustees. "Paint that is glossy," he said, "is glossy from the beginning and does not flatten over a period of time ... It is very easy to measure gloss reflectance instrumentally. If the paint is not flat every dimple from the screws and bumps from the tape will show."[17]

After these contentions a local interior designer was contracted to complete the remainder of the smaller areas.[18] Differences over the interior color motif remained after the building was occupied.

Efforts to revise intercollegiate athletics resumed again during the spring of 1975. Recommendations came from the administration. "I am suggesting," wrote an administrator, "that we as a college make definite plans to have an intercollegiate activity in men's basketball and baseball for the 1975-76 college year. In addition to these two, I am suggesting that plans be made for at least one women's sports program for intercollegiate competition in tennis, volleyball or basketball. Also, consideration needs to be given to the starting of men's teams in either golf, wrestling or tennis on a limited basis for 1975-76."[19] The president also "felt now was the appropriate time to reactivate intercollegiate athletics."[20] The trustees, however, remained firm in their opposition to reviving intercollegiate athletics. "The board," stated the chairman, "will not approve expenditures for intercollegiate athletics until at least after the first year of occupancy of the new building and after they have an opportunity to see the magnitude of costs for operating the facility."[21]

Beecher decided to remain out of a community college district the previous fall, but the issue of extension courses to be offered by community colleges in the district was raised during the 1975 spring semester. At the request of many people in the Beecher district for Prairie State College to offer extension courses, the college sought and received permission from the Illinois Community College Board to provide these services.[22]

Faculty relations, never tranquil, became heated again early in 1975 with the printing of a "Bulletin" distributed to members of the full-time faculty in their mail boxes. The Bulletin included personal news items, many of a quasi-libelous nature, unsigned and directed at the administration and trustees. Purported sponsor of the bulletin was a "Faculty Information Committee." After a few issues, the explosive nature of the personal charges further strained relations between the trustees and administration on the one hand and the faculty on the other. The Bulletin even evoked division among the faculty.

Embarrassed faculty members disavowed and disassociated themselves from the Bulletin and urged those responsible to come forward. The Faculty Senate and the Faculty Union also disavowed any association with the Bulletin. But if there were many faculty who challenged the Bulletin there were others who refuted and challenged the challengers. A faculty member described those responsible as "probably one or maybe two persons who have an ax to grind.' "[23] The Bulletin ceased printing after a few issues but not until after it had sowed more seeds of distrust and strained internal operations of the college.

Faculty dissatisfaction resulted in another strike in June. As usual, this one came at the beginning of summer school and lasted three days before a temporary agreement was reached. In June 1974 a last-minute agreement prevented a strike for the first time. Since the faculty organized in 1969, a strike had always been called before a new contract was written. The college had a striking tradition. The agreement of 1974 provided for reopening on economic or salary issues. The 1975 settlement provided for salary increases for starting teachers; salary increases across the board for two years; and increase in the stipend for summer school and overload; and the district agreeing to provide the full premium for term life insurance for each faculty member.[24]

These problems concerned the administration and the trustees as policy-makers; but the board faced another important problem during the first several months of 1975. This was the selection of a new president and a vice president for business affairs.

"Because of the importance of the position of president to the growth and development of the college," the board stated, "and to the college's ability to meet its responsibility to serve the needs of all of the citizens of the district, the board feels that all effort, care and diligence possible be committed to the task."[25] To assist the trustees in identifying and screening candidates they contracted with a management search and consulting firm. This selection would be a cooperative effort, the board stated, and the participation of faculty and student representatives would be of great importance. The final selection of the president, however, would be the sole responsibility of the board and could not be delegated or abrogated in any way.[26]

In locating a vice president for Business Affairs the trustees took a similar approach. They employed a consulting firm, albeit a different one than for the president, to find and screen candidates.[27] They found James M. Troutman. Born and raised in Joliet, Troutman was the product of a junior college, having graduated from Joliet Junior College. He went on to earn baccalaureate and master degrees from Northern Illinois University. Upon graduation he entered community college business administration, taking an appointment as assistant business manager at Illinois Central College in East Peoria before moving to Richmond Community College at Decatur.[28]

Appointing a president was something else. It was more difficult and took longer. The consulting team had no difficulty in selecting three candidates with excellent qualifications. Each of them, however, decided to take an appointment at another community college.[29] When June arrived the trustees did not have a successor to President Johnson who was leaving the college at month's end. Determined to make a careful selection and not wishing to be hurried into a hasty decision that could prove regrettable, the trustees looked to an interim appointment while they continued the search.

They found an interim president nearby in Thomas E. Deem, coordinator of community college relations and a university professor of Educational Administration at Governors State University. Deem was no stranger to Prairie State College. He had been an original faculty member of the college when it began as Bloom Community College. Deem left the College in 1966 to resume graduate studies at the University of Illinois where he received a doctorate of education degree. Thereafter he became academic dean at Lakeland College, Mattoon, Ill. Subsequently he served as president of two community colleges, at Yakima, Wash., and Logan Community College, Carterville, Ill., before taking an appointment at Governors State University.[30]

When Deem came to Prairie State College for his month's term as interim president he found a different college from the one he left in 1966. His first impression was that of a physical change. The new building on the south campus about to be occupied carried the aura of an institution of higher learning rather than the adjunct of a high school as did the building across the street from Bloom High School. Curriculum had been enlarged, especially in vocational and career programs. There were more extension courses and community services provided. In terms of personnel, the college was much larger with less closely-knit professional and classified staffs. The faculty was larger too and seemed much more militant.[31]

Deem had no misunderstanding about his appointment. He knew he was an interim president but "I still acted as though I was going to be the permanent president."[32] His main task during his brief term consisted of completing the North Central Association accreditation review which began early that year. He arranged and coordinated the review meeting with the North Central Association and the college administration which resulted in the continuation of accreditation for Prairie State College for three years.[33]

Early in June the search for a new president took a sudden turn, and a president was found rather quickly. One of the candidates to whom the trustees offered the presidency but who declined in favor of another position, recommended that the board interview a colleague of his, Richard C. Creal, for the position. The candidate and Creal were in graduate school together and he was aware that Creal was seeking a community college presidency. The trustees contacted Creal and arranged for an interview. "I had not even heard of Prairie State College prior to that day when I got the phone call," said Creal.[34] After an interview, he was offered the appointment and accepted the presidency as of 4 August.

Creal's credentials were impressive, and when the interview was completed the trustees were confident that they had found the new president. The son of a businessman who owned and operated a moving and storage business, and who also served for six years as Mayor of Ann Arbor, Mich., Creal was born and raised in Ann Arbor. He was a product of the Ann Arbor public schools and then moved across town to the University of Michigan where he went "maize and blue" the remainder of the way in his formal education earning a baccalaureate degree in political science, a master's degree in school administration and a doctorate in higher education administration.[35]

His professional experience was extensive. After serving in the Ann Arbor public schools for 10 years as a teacher and another five years as an assistant superintendent, he became vice president for instructional services at Lake Michigan Community College in Benton Harbor, Mich. Besides extensive experience in public school education at all levels through the community college, the new presidential appointee had the rare experience of a trustee in establishing a community college.

While serving as an administrator in the Ann Arbor school system, Creal became interested in the movement to found the Washtenaw County Community College in that city. He took an active part in the committee studying the feasibility of establishing the college. When the college was founded he became a candidate for the original board of trustees where he received the second highest vote total in a group of 34 candidates.[36]

Creal's first visit to Prairie State College came during a strike but this did not faze him. He looked beyond the picket lines and liked what he saw. "I came to Prairie State College," he said, "because of what I saw here."[37] He continued, "It was a vibrant, dynamic institution and had a lot of enthusiasm. The faculty and administration seemed to know each other, work well together and they seemed to be involved. We had a lot of involvement of people. Prairie State College represents to me, the kind of college that I believe a community college ought to be. There are different types of community colleges. Prairie State College is a college that has a diverse set of programs; it covers both the transfer and the training programs, preparing people to go to their vocations and occupations. It invites all people to come in. It is an Open Door institution and it provides people with a great deal of support through another unique program, the personalized learning program."[38]

The new president saw two primary goals as he took office. First was financial stability. The second was more participation on the part of faculty and students in the operation of the college.[39] The president intended to be a strong leader. "I was hired," he said, "to make decisions concerning the college, to recommend organizational and personnel improvements and to make sure those who are responsible fulfill their obligations."[40]

With Richard C. Creal as president the trustees looked forward to a new era for Prairie State College. As the chairman stated, "He was well connected in community college affairs, nationally and locally. He was a man who, because of his contacts and experiences, could end the inbreeding that had been both a blessing and a curse to the college. And he was somebody that the non-Bloom Township and Chicago Heights [people] could more easily identify with...[than those] whom they [perceived] as Bloom High School officials running the community college. Dr. Creal was the bridge that said that this is an institution, it can stand up on its own feet; it has a separate identity, it has a purpose, it is not just a glorified high school"[41]

CHAPTER TWENTY

ADJUSTING TO A NEW CAMPUS AND A NEW ADMINISTRATION

Occupying the new building after a delay of many years took place with mixed emotions in the college. On one hand there was the excitement of occupying a building for the first time and exploring all the nooks and crannies. On the other, the occupation presented new challenges in operation and maintenance. At the same time, long-standing problems, including strains between administration and faculty, did not cease. The first two years in the new building was not a honeymoon. It was more like a family with domestic problems moving from an old location to a new one.

Occupying a New, Main Building

Prairie State College started a new era with the opening of classes and the occupation of the new, main campus building in September 1975. An aura of excitement permeated that first year during which enrollment and graduation records were set as the college adjusted to a new environment.

The first day of classes, especially the first day of fall semester classes, is one of excitement and confusion particularly for students searching to locate classrooms. But the opening of the fall semester at Prairie State College in 1975 was really confusing. Complications began with traffic jams. Hordes of autos converged on the unfinished and inadequate parking lot to the northeast of the new building. Latecomers, finding the parking lot jammed, stopped at the side of the road or just pulled their autos in behind those already parked. Walking students were artful dodgers in attempting to avoid being struck by errant and frustrated motorists.

Plans to begin the semester early were changed in an effort to avoid and reduce last-minute construction tasks. Even so, as students swarmed up the main walk and into the front door sounds of workmen could be heard putting the finishing touches on interior appointments; and a fresh smell of newness was in the air as students tried to locate classrooms.

Actually night classes were the first to be held in the new building with day classes opening the following morning. Thus, the main building first held classes during the 24-hour period beginning the evening of 18 September.

Students came in record numbers. Enrollment had been increasing for several years prior to 1975. Headcount, or the total number of students enrolled, increased 10.1 percent in 1973 over 1972 and 11 percent in 1974 over 1973. In 1975, however, the headcount figure reached 6,134 for an all-time record to date and an increase of 38.8 percent over 1974.[1]

All categories of enrollment gained significantly in the fall of 1975. The most extraordinary increase came in the night school which jumped 52 percent up to 3,700; part-time students increased 41 percent and full-time equivalent students were up 35.3 percent. Total credit hours increased 35.5 percent.[2]

There were several explanations for the sudden, record-breaking enrollment increase. One related to the new building. Experience throughout the state indicates that enrollment grows significantly the year that a new campus opens. So it's reasonable to assume that the new building attracted many students to Prairie State College. Veterans' benefits were up in 1975 which was the last year that benefits could be claimed for many veterans who enrolled to protect these entitlements. Then there was the economy. Conventional wisdom in community college circles holds that when the general economy is down enrollment in community colleges increases, and the economy in 1975 was in a slide.[3]

Burgeoning enrollment was not peculiar to Prairie State College in 1975. Enrollments were booming throughout the Illinois community college system. In the autumn of 1975 community colleges in the state enrolled the equivalent of 157,670 full-time students. This was a 26.7 percent increase from the previous year and marked the first time community colleges had surpassed the state's public universities in undergraduate enrollment. In 1975 the Illinois State Universities system had a total of 136,481 undergraduate full-time equivalents.[4]

While enrollment was booming, the student profile was changing. More older students were enrolling. Registration figures in 1975 indicated a range in age from 16 to 78 with an average age of 28, much older than the average age a few years earlier. Nevertheless, the largest number of students remained in their 20s. According to age groups, 19-year-olds comprised the largest number of students (586), followed by 18-year-olds (543) and 20-year-olds (453). The next largest group included those from 36 to 40 (379).[5] Furthermore, there was a noticeable increase in the number of women enrolled which for the first time reached almost half of the student body.[6]

Another noticeable change was in the number of veterans enrolled, up to 967 from 601 in 1974, representing a gain of 61 percent. Veterans comprised 18 percent of the total student body, representing 21 percent of the total credit hours taken in the fall of 1975.[7]

Several reasons explain this dramatic increase. First was the substantial increase in individual veteran benefits provided in 1975. Furthermore, this was the last year for a large segment of veterans to claim educational benefits. Then there was the depressed economy which made it more difficult for veterans to find employment.[8] These factors, along with the expansion of services of the college and the active program of recruitment and outreach by the Office of Veterans Affairs, contributed to large gains in veteran enrollment.

Contributing to the changing student profile in 1975 was a larger number of minorities who enrolled. African-Americans comprised 12 percent of the student body.[9] This exceeded the national average of 10.3 percent for African-American undergraduate enrollment in 1976 which represented the peak year for black undergraduate enrollment in the United States.[10] Hispanic enrollment also increased to 3.4 percent before increasing dramatically at the college during the next two years.[11]

Also responsible for the booming enrollment was a larger proportion of less fortunate students. Of the total enrolled in the fall of 1975, 1,158 (18.8 percent) were classified as economically disadvantaged and eligible for financial aid.[12]

Once the initial aura of excitement wore off there came a time of adjustment. Problems and frustrations arose.

A gap in sidewalk planning appeared early. When classes opened, a single sidewalk connected the main parking lot to the northeast, but there was no sidewalk access to the northwest parking lot across Vollmer Road. A trustee noted this omission enroute to a board meeting. The problem was addressed at that meeting when bids were solicited to run a sidewalk connecting the northwest parking lot and the northeast corner of the main building.[13]

Few problems are more immediate or critical to a community or commuter college than parking accommodations. The lack of adequate parking became a problem from the start.[14] The issue persisted and grew more intense as the year moved along. Lack of adequate parking led to the problem of parking regulations. Who would be allowed to park where and how, if at all?

Who had authority to regulate parking? It was proposed that college security officials serve parking citations. But this led to further complications when the city of Chicago Heights required that the college security force be recognized as a law enforcement agency by the state of Illinois and that the college designate "no parking areas" before regulations could be imposed.[15]

After the first year of confusion and frustration, the college moved to enlarge the parking lot to accommodate 600 more cars.[16]

The parking lot set the stage for another problem--the theft of citizenband radios. At this time the popularity of these electronic devices was causing security problems in parking lots throughout the area. An organized group conducted the thefts. Using a metal pipe or crowbar to smash the driver's side window, the radio could be removed in 30 seconds. On one occasion the main building fire alarm was pulled causing all security guards to rush to the building. During the ensuing confusion three radios were stolen.[17]

Another problem which came to the fore during the first semester of classes in the main building was the lack of public transportation to the college. From the day the college opened the large majority of students commuted in automobiles. A small group which lived nearby walked. But a number of students who lacked autos lived far from the college. Without auto transportation they were deprived of the opportunity to attend college.

The problem was not neglected. Since 1971 efforts had been made to bring public transportation to the college without results. One of the first projects of the Prairie State College Foundation was an attempt to bring a shuttlebus system to the campus. Finally, at the beginning of the 1977 fall semester the Regional Transportation Authority arranged to supply public bus service to the college and transportation barriers were removed.[18]

The changing student body which was beginning to include a larger number of young mothers with small children produced another problem. Without child care the mothers could not attend classes. Beginning with the spring semester of 1976 the college provided a Drop-In-Center where young children could be cared for while their mothers attended classes.[19]

Toward the end of the first year student over-enthusiasm and over-promotion led to an embarrassing episode which tarnished the new building. An extremely enthusiastic crowd including many non-students swarmed into the building for a rock concert sponsored by a college club, leaving the stairwells, interior building and parking lot strewn with debris. This compelled a reassessment of cleaning and security measures for future events of this kind.[20]

With the excitement of adjusting to the new building students could hardly be expected to recognize the significance of the occupation. This importance, however, did not escape other members of the college family. Before the opening of fall classes plans were launched to dedicate the main building sometime during the first semester. But delays in completing interior furnishings postponed these plans.

On 8 February 1976 the college celebrated its milestone with a dedication ceremony. It was another institutional event commemorating the college's history, honoring an achievement and advertising the future. It was a Sunday afternoon and a large crowd filled the mall. David M. Kennedy, former United States Secretary of the Treasury and prominent Chicago banker, delivered the principal address; several local clergymen participated as the building was transferred symbolically from the architects, general contractor and state agencies to the college. A tour of the building and campus and a public reception completed the program.[21]

Eight years and nine months had elapsed since the decision to construct the campus. No Illinois community college had taken so long for completion. But if the time elapsed was long, the satisfaction was greater. As taxpayers, nearly everybody in the large audience could appreciate the accomplishment. In November 1967 they had committed their resources to matching state funds for construction of the building now completed.

But for a handful of those in the audience the day was especially notable. These included one or two of the original Bloom High School board members who resolved to build a community college in 1955. The first president of the college, several original trustees and several original faculty members were among those in attendance who savored the event. They had seen the college separate from the high school, become an independent institution whose image had changed concretely and symbolically.

For nearly a decade the college had been in transition in interim facilities. Now Prairie State College was an institution with its own campus and facilities. There were times when this small group must have held serious doubts if the moment would ever arrive. Once more, American dedication and commitment to education prevailed. This resolve buttressed with that transcendent and spiritual strength of faith had provided another human triumph.

Four months later the 17th annual commencement provided another opportunity to reflect on the past, present and future of the college. To observe the event the college called on one of its former students, Juan Ramon Garcia of the University of Michigan to deliver the principal address. Garcia had attended the college before eventually receiving a doctorate in history.

This was the largest commencement to date for the college. The mall was filled with parents, relatives and friends of the graduates. A record number of 278 associate degrees and 54 certificates were awarded. Doris Hill, a long-time trustee, described her feelings and the event in moving terms. "I suppose the proudest time of my tenure," she said, "was the first graduation in the permanent building. That was a very rewarding time. I sat in that mall and thought, oh my goodness, there were times when I didn't know if we would ever get this built."[22] Indeed, the building was built, and Prairie State College was its own institution. A tremendous milestone had been reached.

A Little New But More of the Old

During the first two years in the main building, besides experiencing the excitement of adjusting to a different environment, the college underwent administrative reorganization, confronted new challenges associated with this environment and wrestled with some of the same issues that had been occupying much attention for nearly a decade.

When Dr. Creal assumed the presidency he observed several opportunities for improvement. Not the least of these was the development of community relations. Rapid growth of the college at that time required planning and development. There was a need for evaluation of job performances, personal and professional development and administration of personnel.

Thus, early in the fall of 1975 a committee of faculty and administration set about to revise the administrative structure. Rather than 16 departments continuing to report to the vice president for academic services, three division directors were created. Department heads reported to these directors who in turn reported to the vice president, thus reducing the span of control for instruction.[23]

Besides these changes in academic administration there were several other administrative modifications. A vice president for administrative services was appointed thus relieving the president of some responsibilities and freeing him for community development. Three additional director positions were created. These were directors of financial operations, counseling and admissions, and personnel. These changes provided for more counseling and comprehensive orientation programs for new students while counseling hours were expanded into the evening. Testing services were added, registration processes were facilitated and high school and college articulation improved.[24]

Several problems confronted this reorganized administration. First of these had to do with the lack of facilities for the rapidly-expanding occupational and technical programs. Original plans for the main building included facilities for occupational and technical programs, but these were deleted because of inflationary pressures in the late 1960s. The need for space, however, did not abate. Pressure increased as the demand for these programs grew. Thus, after settling into the main building, the question was how and where facilities would be provided.

A few weeks after occupying the new building trustees confronted the problem. Two alternatives were available: One was to locate a new facility on the interim campus which needed renovation after nearly a decade of hard use. The other was an addition to the main campus building. After a year of serious consideration a decision was made to renovate the north (interim) campus and add the vocational/technical building to the main campus building.[25] There were compelling reasons for this choice. It was closer to administrative offices and general education classes which vocational students were required to attend. In addition utility costs would be reduced by making use of available facilities.[26]

There remained the matter of cost, always a bugbear. Fortunately, through prudent handling of funds on the part of the trustees, costs were borne largely out of the bond issue funds of 1967 which provided for site acquisition, building construction and equipment purchases. This meant that the district needed to fund only 25 percent of the cost. "I would like to stress," the president stated, "that it is due to the excellent management of college funds by the board that the money for the new building is available in the Site and Construction fund."[27] Actually the college originally advanced the total amount but the General Assembly narrowly passed a belated appropriation in 1980 which reimbursed the college.[28]

Ground was broken 10 April 1978 and the building was dedicated 12 August 1979. This represented an elapsed time of only 16 months which did not go unnoticed by Prairie State College officials who were in the habit of calculating construction time in years rather than months. The 14,740-square-foot-structure included a welding laboratory, heating and air-conditioning laboratory, sheet-metal working laboratory, three classrooms and large undesignated laboratory space.[29]

Resolution of the parking lot construction was accomplished along with construction of the vocational/technical building.

Like the building addition, the question was not need but financing. Seeking to increase its tax levy at this time and thus alleviate its financial bind, the college confronted a public relations problem. Many taxpayers seemed confused that the college was seeking to raise its tax levy but at the same time was prepared to spend operational funds for a parking lot. To offset this confusion, the parking lot construction was postponed.[30] Later, however, it was completed and funded out of the Site and Construction Fund as originally planned, but this was misunderstood by the taxpayers.[31] The project added 600 parking spaces providing a total of more than 2,000 off-street parking spaces, or one space for at least every three students enrolled at the college.[32] Shortly thereafter six tennis courts were constructed on the north (interim) campus.

Another uncomfortable problem developed when the heating and cooling system malfunctioned. The problem began during the first year of occupation, intensifying during the second year. The problem emerged mainly on the third and fourth floors where classrooms were located and in the bookstore at the south side of the main floor. During winter the heat did not function properly thus forcing classes to move or be canceled. During the summer the cooling system did not function with the same consequences. The problem became so acute in the bookstore during summer that staff people became ill when temperatures soared to 100 degrees.[33]

Complicating the situation was the college's position as a victim in a running confrontation between the architect, the construction contractor and the Capital Development Board, all blaming the malfunctions on the others. Under Illinois community college construction statutes, the Capital Development Board held title to college property while the architects and contractors were responsible for construction. At completion the college gained ownership. After several months of negotiations during which the college was called upon to pay for correction of the malfunction, the college passed a resolution urging the Capital Development Board to take immediate steps to correct the problem. After more than a year the architect, in conjunction with the insurance company, agreed to pay the cost of correction.[34]

As if these new challenges were not disconcerting enough, old problems persisted. One was the continuing struggle in the courts with the $4.8 million civil rights lawsuit involving the deposed third president of the college. A few days after classes opened in the new building the case took a turn. In response to his appeal, the Seventh Circuit Appellate Court "held that the college had not violated or breached its contract with Dr. Hostrop, that the college had cause for terminating his contract...but that the board as an entity was responsible for damages to Dr. Hostrop for denying him a pretermination hearing" and returned the case to the original district court for assessing these damages.[35] In his appeal to the United States Supreme Court, however, the court declined to review the case and returned it to the original trial judge for a final hearing on "the very narrowly defined" issue of damages.[36] The court seemed to reaffirm the position of the college, but the case, already more than five years in litigation, would continue to consume time and attention.

Of all the old problems, however, none was more oppressive than financing. Already confronting a financial crisis, Prairie State College moved into the main building during perhaps the worst state funding crisis in Illinois Community College history to that time, a crisis which extended from 1975 to 1977.[37]

This funding pinch stemmed largely from flaws inherent in the funding system for apportionments. This system is designed to provide state funds per hour based on the total number of credit hours which all community college students in the state are expected to take and the average cost per hour. Credit hour estimates are presented to the General Assembly which appropriates the funds for each fiscal year. If appropriations fall short, the General Assembly may, and often does, approve of deficiency appropriations. Sometimes, however, the deficiency appropriations are not passed or if passed they are insufficient. On the other hand, if appropriations are too great the unused funds cannot be utilized. Much depends upon the accuracy of enrollment estimates.

State funding is also available to some districts including Prairie State College in the form of equalization payments. These are designed to adjust for the inequity between wealthy and poorer districts.

Between 1974 and 1978 Illinois community college enrollments increased rapidly. In 1975 the increase was 26.7 percent over 1974.[38] These enrollment gains were miscalculated during these years with drastic financial results for community colleges and especially Prairie State College, perhaps the fastest growing community college in Illinois between 1975 and 1977.

In fiscal 1974 the state provided flat-rate, apportionment funding grants of $18.50 per credit hour; but because of a significant enrollment increase in fiscal 1975 this amount was insufficient to keep up with the enrollment increase. A supplemental appropriation was passed, but it was too little to meet the deficit. Therefore, state support decreased to $18.12 per credit hour.[39]

The crisis grew significantly worse. In fiscal 1976 the governor originally proposed funding all flat-rate grants at a level of $21.70 per semester hour, but in May 1975 he reduced this amount to $19.20. The student population, however, increased 25 percent rather than the expected 10 percent. The General Assembly refused to approve a supplemental appropriation to cover the deficit so the effective flat-rate grant became $16.20, a reduction of 25.8 percent from the original proposals for the year.[40]

To every community college in Illinois this was a hard blow; but to Prairie State College, in the midst of settling into a new building with the increase in maintenance and utility costs, it was dreadful. These drastic miscalculations and funding at the state level cost the college $280,000 by the end of the fiscal year 1976 and threatened a $50,000 deficit.[41] The crisis grew worse. The deficit for fiscal 1977 exceeded $200,000 and the cumulative deficit by the end of fiscal 1978 was expected to exceed $500,000.[42]

Compounding the problem was the lack of financial help from other sources. The supplemental equalization grant of $37,000 which the college received in fiscal 1976 was eliminated for 1977 while being increased for other colleges.[43] Then there was the constant drawback of the low tax rate. The college continued to struggle with the second lowest tax rate in the state.

Financial strains connected with the move into the main building, however, were not unexpected to the board, albeit the magnitude of the miscalculations at the state level were not anticipated. Meeting for the first time in the main building, the trustees anticipated that needs connected with the move would require planning, especially for financing. The board moved to project planning on a two-year basis for fiscal needs.[44]

Other sources of revenue were tapped, but they could not make up for the growing deficit. Approximately $213,000 in new dollars from grants, including equipment for the Learning Center helped. This did not include grants for nursing, special services, disadvantaged students, Head Start and others.[45] Conservation efforts also helped. During summer months, the college went on a four-day work week by extending working hours the first four days and closing on the fifth. This resulted in an annual saving of nearly $10,000.[46] Despite reduced revenues and increased costs the college continued to offer instructional services at a lower cost-per-student than any other community college in the area.[47]

There can be little doubt that the timing of the move to the main building was poor in terms of financing. Always formidable, the financial problem seemed worse than ever after the first two years in the new building. The problem was so frustrating because the college had no control over state funding. It was another paradox. More students in record-breaking numbers for Prairie State College as well as community colleges throughout the state only seemed to worsen the financial problem.

Besides the financial problem was administrative and faculty friction. Seldom smooth since the college became independent, these relations remained strained in the shift to a new campus. Several issues brought these two parts of the college into contention.

The first issue was reorganization of the administration. The faculty opposed this for two reasons. First, the faculty had not been consulted on the proposal. This, the faculty felt, could "only lead to further division and conflict at a time when the best interests of the college would suggest a closer working relationship than ever before."[48]

A second issue was the expense of adding several administrators at a time when the college faced financial difficulties. Despite large growth in enrollment, the faculty held that instructional staff grew by 6 percent while the increase of administrative staff was 35 percent. The faculty argued, through its union representatives, that the administrative reorganization at that time did not serve the best interests of the college and the faculty recommended that action be deferred until long-term planning could be developed by a system in which all segments of the college would be involved.[49]

Another basis of strife between the faculty and administration was the academic calendar. When the proposal for changing the calendar to provide for an early start first arose, the objection of the faculty union was essentially that there had not been sufficient faculty or student consultation. This objection continued through adoption of the calendar for 1976-77. Regarding the starting date, the faculty union's concern was accepted and incorporated into the calendar. The Faculty Union, however, continued to protest that the revision did not follow the provisions for developing a calendar as spelled out in the Union-Board agreement and concluded that the contract was violated.[50]

Another issue provoked more acrimony than any other between the trustees, administration and faculty. This was the relationship between the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Union. "The principal purpose of the association and senate," as stated in the original Policies and Procedures Manual, "is to create an effective role for faculty in the college. These faculty organizations allow for the representation of all educational interests, including the formulation of goals, curriculum, student policies, evaluation, research, studies, projects, appointment, reappointment, tenure and educational standards"[51]

With recognition of the Faculty Union in 1969, positions of the senate and union became blurred due to large overlapping membership. The Faculty Association included all full-time faculty while the union membership included about 90 percent of the faculty. For some time it was generally assumed that the Faculty Senate, an elected body of the faculty Association, provided the mechanism for resolving the educational problems facing the institution. It also provided an avenue for teachers to pursue interests other than welfare. The Faculty Senate's function of consolidating and coordinating these items tended to bring about more thoughtful decisions in regard to the educational goals of the college.[52] At the same time the Faculty Union was concerned with the welfare of the faculty in matters of salary, fringe benefits and working conditions. The union was responsible for working out inequities through negotiation.[53]

This relationship took a sudden turn in June 1976 when the faculty, feeling that its recommendations on academic policies were ignored or directly reversed by the administration and then sent to the board without mention of the faculty position, voted to affiliate with the union.[54] The measure directed all members of the senate to become union members and gave the senate the duties of representing teachers in the areas of curriculum, academic policies, student affairs and other collegiate matters. The union's executive committee would continue representing the teachers as their bargaining agent in matters pertaining to salaries, fringe benefits and conditions of employment.[55]

Reaction of the trustees was quick and clear. On 2 September the board withdrew "recognition of the Faculty Senate functioning in the manner as it functions in the Policies and Procedures Manual until such time as they are reestablished as an independent organization from the Faculty Union."[56] The board felt that the faculty action was a union takeover which abrogated an agreement in the procedures manual. "It is apparent," the chairman said, "that the union is attempting to say that anything related to academic life in any way will now be subject to union negotiation." He went on, "We can't accept this kind of an agreement."[57] The board resolution gave the senate until 1 October to restore its autonomy or face termination of its traditional role in campus affairs.

Withdrawing faculty recognition meant non-recognition of the faculty representative at board meetings. It also meant that job benefits and other privileges handled through the senate were suspended. Faculty representatives held a press conference and charged that the board had silenced the faculty voice. They urged restoration of full recognition.[58] Faculty leaders appealed to meet directly with the board but this was denied much to their chagrin. The board response was "that since the Faculty Senate initiated the grievance, they would have to initiate withdrawal."[59] These actions, the faculty retorted, were clear attempts to "impose an autocratic procedure on the college."[60]

As the spring semester moved along tensions between the board, administration and the faculty grew. Lines seemed drawn as if in an adversary contest. A strike at the end of the semester came as no surprise with expiration of the contract before the opening of summer school.

Negotiations began in April and by the end of the semester all issues were agreed upon except salary. These included class size and the position of the Faculty Senate in relation to the union. A marathon session lasting 36 hours broke down just before classes were scheduled 14 June and a strike was called.[61] Negotiations resumed the next day and after a 15-hour session an agreement was reached on salary and classes resumed 16 June after a two-day strike. The two-year contract provided for a 5 percent salary increase and benefits during each of the two years, limiting class size to an additional three students and agreement on the position of the Faculty Senate as it relates to the union.[62] Essentially the position of the Faculty Senate reverted to the original contract. "The union," according to the agreement, "through its academic committee (the Faculty Senate) may make recommendations to the college president on academic policies, curriculum matters, student welfare, registration, admission policies and other educational standards."[63]

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

PROFILE OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE APPROACHING ITS FIRST QUARTER-OF-A-CENTURY

The various components of Prairie State College continued to change in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The trustees, administration and faculty, however, did not modify as much as the supportive staff during this time. Affirmative action and efforts toward its compliance brought about the change in administration and faculty. The establishment of a Supportive Staff Advisory Committee in 1981 brought about official recognition of this segment, which had been an integral part of the college from opening day.

Board of Trustees and Administration, 1975-82

The Board of Trustees continued to be male-dominated and under-representative of minorities while increasing in size to eight members with the addition of a student representative as the decade of the 1980s began. Similarly, the administration continued its male-domination and bias against minorities while increasing in size with some reorganization at the second level during the same period.

With the exception of five members who were essentially carryovers from the early 1970s and who retired from the board by 1977, 16 people served on the seven-member board from 1975 through 1982. During these seven years the policy-making body continued to be male-dominated with 12 males and four females. The board was also under-representative of minorities with two African-Americans and no other minorities among the membership. In terms of formal education the trustees were rather strong. More than half were college graduates and one held a Doctor of Philosophy degree. Religion-wise, more than half were Protestants in a strong Catholic community.[1]

As had been the case from the beginning of the college, professions and business provided the large majority of trustees (81.2 percent). Among the professional people were two lawyers, two certified public accountants, two hospital administrators, an industrial engineer, a public relations director and an adult probation officer. There were four businessmen and three homemakers.[2] The trustees did, indeed, represent a waspish (white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant) tendency.[3]

Selection of trustees continued through the election process with unexpired terms being filled through appointments until the next regular election. Sometimes these appointments for unexpired terms were made from runners-up in the previous election.[4] The usual procedure, however, was to announce vacancies and conduct personal interviews prior to an appointment by the board.[5]

Elections of Prairie State College trustees throughout most of this period were held along with public school board elections in April each year. This, however, was changed with passage of the Consolidated Election Act of 1977 (Public Act 80-936). For more than a decade there had been efforts to consolidate public elections in Illinois.[6] It was argued that such a consolidation would reduce voter confusion, increase voter participation and reduce election costs thus saving taxpayers' money. "The new consolidated election law," Governor Thompson wrote to the college president, "will reduce the multiplicity of local elections and help focus voter attention on the electoral process."[7] Essentially the law provided for general primary and general elections to be held in even-numbered years; and consolidated primary elections and non-partisan elections (school boards) in odd-numbered years.[8]

These non-partisan school district elections held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of odd-numbered years went into effect for Prairie State College on 3 November 1981. For the college this first election under the new law resulted in expected confusion. Election precinct boundaries were changed, and this led to bewilderment especially along the borders of the college district. Because of these discrepancies election results were delayed for several hours and results were contested. Three Prairie State College trustees were elected under the new law. A positive result of the election was a 100 percent increase in votes cast for college trustees over the previous election in 1980.[9]

Of much more concern than the changing of election dates and voting-district boundaries brought about by the new election law was the increasing effort in the late 1970s to bring partisanship into school board elections. There were efforts on the part of teachers' unions to place their members on school boards despite the conflict of interest aspect. Teachers contemplated seeking positions on their own boards without success. In other cases teachers in one institution were elected to boards of another district.

Other partisan efforts carried more serious ramifications. In the late 1970s one of the Bloom Township political-party organizations began to slate candidates in Prairie State College trustee elections along with slated candidates in grade and high school elections. In the 1981 trustee election this partisan organization lent its support to two of the three successful candidates.[10] These efforts, albeit undesirable and inconsistent with the principle of nonpartisanship school elections, partly explain the record-breaking turnout in that election.[11]

The board of trustees continued to act essentially as a committee-of-the whole. This did not preclude committees on the board to study special problems, but action was not taken without open discussion of the whole board.[12] The schedule of meetings called for a regular meeting once a month; but there were occasions when regular meetings were canceled because there were not enough items requiring action to hold a meeting.[13] For the most part, however, there was much work that required board consideration, and meetings frequently lasted into the small hours of the next day. Some items called for much consideration so the board held workshops. Such problems as enrollment, parking and the intractable financial issue were dealt with at workshop meetings at which time reports were given and more information supplied. Official action, however, took place only at regular board meetings.[14]

The most salient change in the trustees as a whole during the turn of the decade was the addition of a non-voting student representative in May 1982. For nearly a decade since the enactment of Public Act 78-822 in 1973 the lack of student participation in policy-making and governance of the college had been a "touchy issue." Essentially this act provided for full membership of a student on the college trustees with all rights and privileges, including that of attending executive sessions, except voting.[15]

Compliance with the law became a source of contention for Prairie State College between the trustees on one side and the students and faculty on the other. This strife continued for nearly a decade. Actually since 1967 the trustees provided for a student and faculty representative at all board meetings. But neither the student or faculty representative were allowed to vote, initiate motions or attend executive sessions. The trustees had two reservations about full student participation. First there was the question of constitutionality.[16] Then there was the simple matter of trust in delicate personnel matters discussed in executive sessions which would be opened to students but denied to faculty. Such a condition could bring undue pressure upon the student representative to divulge restricted information.

Ever since passage of the law, students urged compliance. They welcomed support of the Faculty Senate which voted unanimously to support the proposal that a student representative should participate in executive sessions.[17] Indeed, faculty did not object to students having access to restricted information even if they were; it was the next best thing to having access to the information themselves providing they could gain the confidence of the student trustees.

After nearly a decade of consideration on 15 April 1982 the trustees moved to approve a student representative on the board with all privileges of membership "other than the right to vote."[18] On 20 May 1982 Raymond K. Urchell III, became the first student trustee of Prairie State College.[19]

The election and tenure of the first student representative, however, seemed to bear out previous problems and board reservations about the seating of a student trustee. In his election there were 1,363 unused ballots with the winner receiving 126 out of 137 valid votes thus demonstrating that students were not that excited about board representation. The student representative attended trustee meetings regularly. As a matter of fact he had perfect attendance at regular board meetings during the first 11 meetings.

Thus a wave of shock and surprise spread across the board room at the announcement of his resignation in the April 1983 board meeting. The student trustee had not registered for the spring semester and thus had been ineligible to sit as a student trustee for three meetings. "I'll be damned," said one trustee. "I am appalled," said another. "He gained the confidence of the board and the students and he misused it. I don't think this was a mistake, but was done by design." Much to his credit, Urchell apologized and resigned. "I had no intent to defraud the board," he said. "I want to apologize to the board and students for it. It was my mistake and I feel very guilty and embarrassed about it."[20]

Like the trustees, the administration changed little in the late 1970s and early 1980s as compared with the early part of the decade. There was, however, an increase in numbers and a trend toward stronger academic training among administrators in the second half of the decade.

In terms of numbers or size those in administration increased from 11 in 1975 to 17 in 1977, a gain of 54.5 percent. Excluding replacements, this number increased to 22 by 1982 at the second level, that is below the rank of vice president. Reorganization at the second level explains this increase. In 1979 the Office of Industrial Development and Placement was added; in 1980 the Office of Institutional Research and Grants was established; in 1981 Instructional Services was reorganized to add another division; and in 1982 the division of Developmental Education was established.[21]

In terms of profile the administration retained its male domination and bias against minorities and women. From 1975 through 1982 nine people held the position of vice president; all were males including one African-American.[22] This majority and male bias drew criticism from the United States Department of Labor which called for an update and compliance with the college's affirmative action program.[23]

The second level of administration was more integrated toward minorities and women than the vice presidents. Males and caucasians continued to dominate this level also. Of the 17 administrators at this level in the late 1970s 13 were males one of which was Hispanic.[24]

If the administration as a whole was not completely acceptable to affirmative action regulations in terms of minorities and women, it was rather stable. In the late 1970s there were six people who served as vice presidents including three replacements. These replacements were the consequence of a retirement, a death and a resignation. The second level of administration was even more stable. At this level 17 served and there were only three replacements.[25]

The area with the most change from the early 1970s and the late 1970s was formal educational training. Before 1975, of the three who served as vice presidents, one held a Doctorate of Philosophy, one held a Doctorate of Education and two held master's degrees. Before 1975 there were no doctorates at the second level of administration and only five master's degrees. By the turn of the decade at this level there was one Doctor of Philosophy, three Doctorates in education, and nine master's degrees.[26] It seemed clear that as community colleges were becoming more established and recognized in Illinois and throughout the nation, they were attracting better academically qualified people in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Faculty and Supportive Staff

The other two integral parts of the college, faculty and supportive staff, continued their efforts toward defining their respective positions in the overall operation of the institution during the late 1970s. Because the college was a federal government contractor, their appointments brought the college into affirmative action accountability. This responsibility compelled the college to reassess its procedures in terms of appointments and hiring.

The overall profile of the faculty in the late 1970s did not change dramatically from the previous decade. There remained two segments: full-time and part-time. There was also an increase in total numbers. The whole increased from 335 in 1976 to 371 in 1982 representing a gain of 10.7 percent. The shift toward more part-time instructors which began in the early 1970s continued. Here the growth was from 241 in 1976 to 268 in 1982, a gain of 11.2 percent. At the same time the gain in full-time teachers increased from 94 to 103 or 9.5 percent. By the end of the decade part-time faculty out-numbered full-time by a ratio of 7 to 3.[27]

Another continuing trend was that of employing more women on the full-time faculty. On the average between 1976 and 1982 women comprised 41.2 percent of the faculty as compared to 37.8 percent during the first half of the decade. Women, however, comprised only 29.9 percent of the part-time faculty during the last part of the decade.[28]

Minorities comprised 9.97 percent of the full-time faculty between 1976 and 1982. In terms of total numbers these varied between eight and 12 during that time, except for one who was black.[29]

In terms of qualifications, the faculty was strong. The full-time faculty was more involved in the transfer program, and presented more experience than part-time faculty. On the average during the last part of the decade between 1976 and 1982 78.3 percent of the full-time faculty held master's degrees. Adding to the strength of the faculty during this period 4 percent held the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the highest academic degree.

All these doctorates were granted from large midwestern state universities. This represented an increase in numbers from three to five over the first half of the decade. The full-time faculty also included a Doctor of Dental Science, a Bachelor of Law and a certified public accountant. During the same period 11 faculty members earned educational doctorates from Nova University.[30]

Besides strong academic credentials, the faculty was experienced. Between 1976 and 1982, on the average, 84.1 percent of the full-time faculty were tenured. This figure declined from 88.7 percent in 1979 to 73.7 percent in 1982 as senior faculty members retired.[31]

In addition to solid training and experience the faculty sought to update and strengthen its competence through in-service development. Efforts in this direction began with the formation of a Professional Development Committee in 1972.[32] At an early meeting the committee defined professional development as meaning "continuing education in an all inclusive sense."[33] Shortly after moving into the main building this committee reorganized and altered its name to Staff Development albeit the main purpose remained unchanged. Under this committee's leadership regular staff development programs were held regularly throughout the academic year with a complete day devoted to these activities at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters at which guest speakers with expertise in various fields were presented. Supportive staff and administrators shared in these programs.[34]

Not surprising, in view of the faculty's quality, Prairie State College instructors received recognition as heads of educational organizations at the national and state levels. One co-authored a play which was presented on regional television. Trustees sponsored annual recognition programs and presented awards to several faculty members for "outstanding contributions."[35] Indeed, the Prairie State College faculty, strong from the beginning, continued to uphold its standards.

The faculty carried out its main function of providing instruction with competence; but there remained the problem of identifying the role of faculty and its relationship to the overall operation of the college. This issue had persisted from the time the college separated from the high school and became a part of the Illinois Community College system. Adding to this difficulty was the division between full-time and part-time faculty. With the majority of part-time faculty instructing one course, the tendency was for full-time faculty to teach mostly during the day and for part-time faculty to teach mostly during the evening. Communication between the two groups broke down and common interests suffered, especially since part-time faculty were not eligible for union membership.[36] The problem, however, was not entirely neglected, and action was taken whereby administrators were assigned to contracting part-time faculty to create a closer working relationship and to bring the part-time faculty to a closer feeling for the College.[37]

The full-time faculty represented more of a cohesive group in the late 1970s. As it had since its formation in 1969, the Teachers' Union continued to speak for the full-time faculty, especially in matters pertaining to salary, fringe benefits and working conditions while the Faculty Senate made recommendations on academic policies, curriculum matters, student welfare, registration, admission policies and other educational standards. After more than a year of bitter controversy between the trustees and the union this issue was clarified and agreed upon in 1977.[38]

As the seventies drew to a close there was a reorganization within the union. Originally in 1969 the union formed as the Prairie State College Chapter of the Cook

County College Teachers Union Number 1600. The expertise, numbers and financial strength of the Chicago-based organization prompted this structure. After nearly a decade, however, it was believed that the Prairie State group had sufficient numbers, resources and experience to stand alone. There was also a great deal of feeling on the part of the Prairie State College union that the Chicago organization was exerting too much influence. Thus in March 1978 the Prairie State College union members organized as the Prairie State College Federation of Teachers Local 3816.[39]

As the union grew there were the inherent problems of growth. There was always the issue of union solidarity. With greater numbers there was greater strength but unity became more difficult to maintain. As in most organizations, a few more assertive people tended to dominate, and there was some dissension.[40] The union, however, continued to speak for the faculty with more than 90 percent of the faculty as members. As the late 1970s moved along, confrontation between the union and the board and administration remained the norm and a solid, professional working relationship was still lacking.

Besides trustees, administration and faculty, the fourth integral division involved with operation of the college was the supportive staff, consisting of at least 19 different categories of employees who sustained day-to-day operations. These workers included secretaries, technicians, clerks, typists, custodians, maintenance and security workers besides at least a dozen other categories.[41] Like the faculty, the supportive staff consisted of full-time and part-time employees. Unlike the faculty, however, the supportive staff was biased toward females.[42] Among full-time employees, 75.8 percent were females, and among part-time workers, 73.4 percent were females.[43]

From the beginning the supportive staff established itself as an integral part of the college with a high performance. "I know they give excellent service," said an administrator under whose direction many staff were employed.[44] He went on to state that they performed their assignments as well as or better than the other two segments of the college.

Despite having established their place as an integral part of the college, the main problem facing the supportive staff in the late 1970s, like the faculty, was defining their identity within the college. But where the faculty was recognized from the outset, the supportive staff was hardly noticed. This group was not even identified in the original policies and procedures statement.[45] In the second policies statement these employees were identified as nonacademic personnel, and not until 1972 were they designated as supportive staff.[46] Despite this lack of identification, these employees were the most rapidly-growing division within the college with full-time workers increasing from 16 in 1967 to 35 in 1971, to 45 in 1977 and to 87 in 1981, representing an overall gain of 443 percent, much greater than any other segment of the college.[47]

Inextricably involved with the problem of identity for the supportive staff was the ever-present issue of economics--that is, wages or salary. With the increase in numbers there were different categories of work. This necessitated pay scales for different job categories. This difficulty spurred more than half of the supportive staff to request that the teachers' union represent them as bargaining agent. This request, albeit presented to the trustees, was as far as the effort went. The staff did not organize.[48]

There were other non-economic concerns for the supportive staff. There was the parking problem. The supportive staff held that there should be a staff parking lot, because of the constant and rapid movement of student cars which increased the threat of auto damage.[49]

Between 1975 and 1982 the supportive staff made strides toward resolving their primary concerns. Steps toward recognition of the supportive staff was an entity in the college were taken in 1977 to comply with the policy of having a Supportive Staff Advisory Committee.[50] Such a committee, formally effected in November 1981, was charged with "the responsibility of facilitating communications between the members of the supportive staff and the administration in matters of concern relating to policies, procedures or work rules."[51] Formal job descriptions and a salary-range schedule were effected in 1976 and revised in 1979.[52]

Thus having established itself as an efficient segment of the college operation in its own right from the outset, the supportive staff moved toward official recognition of this status at the turn of the decade.

While striving to work out their identity within the college operating structure, the faculty, supportive staff and administration in their appointment and hiring brought the college into relations with a strong outside force, affirmative action and federal government accountability.

When the college adopted its initial affirmative action program in 1973 there was numerical imbalance in all divisions of employment. The administration which consisted of 13 members was entirely male and white; the faculty was 89 percent white and 60 percent male; and the supportive staff was 89 percent white.[53] During the next three years affirmative action compliance began with results in the professional staff but with few significant changes in the supportive staff.[54]

During the next several years the college assumed that it was moving ahead in the area of affirmative action at least in comparison with other community colleges. In terms or minority employment next to the City Colleges of Chicago and the State Community College of East St. Louis, Prairie State College had the highest percentage of minority employment in Illinois at 20.6 percent. This represented a steady gain over several years, from 13.7 percent in 1975 and 14.5 percent in 1977.[55] In terms of female employees the college ranked ninth among all 52 community college campuses in the state with 55.3 percent. This figure also represented an increase from 46.4 percent in 1975 to 51.4 percent in 1977.[56]

Under existing rules of affirmative action, members of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (U.S. Department of Labor) charged with monitoring affirmative action programs, visited the college in April 1981 as part of a routine and standard compliance review. Despite the college's favorable comparisons with other colleges, the reviewers found several inadequacies and urged that the college take more aggressive steps toward affirmative action. First, the college did not have an ongoing affirmative action program approved annually by the trustees. Such a plan, the reviewers stated, should set hiring goals for each administrative and instructional unit consistent with affirmative action; it should provide for hiring and promoting minorities in proportion to the number of available, qualified candidates in the college district labor market; and the plan should establish goals for part-time faculty.[57] Besides goal-setting activities, the reviewers recommended that the college expand its recruiting activities, set guidelines for committee organization, advertising and screening in order to seek out minorities rather than merely announcing openings.[58]

Learning of these many deficiencies was discomforting, but when the reviewers imposed a 30-day deadline in moving toward compliance the effect was downright startling.[59] As a federal contractor, if the college failed to comply it could lose federal funding. The college took direct action. First step was to appoint the vice president for administrative services as affirmative action officer. After gaining an extension on the deadline a plan was completed, approved by the trustees, submitted to the Labor Department and accepted.[60]

The plan called for creation of a Community Advisory Committee to provide recommendations for improving the college's affirmative action program with special emphasis on improving the recruiting efforts. It also called for no racial discrimination; no sex discrimination; no sexual harassment; no religious or national origin discrimination; no age discrimination; no nepotism; and provided for parental leave and disability for pregnancy.[61]

A Community Moves Along

In terms of population growth and direction, socioeconomic structure and economy, the Prairie State College community continued to move in much the same direction as it had for the past two decades during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Growthwise the population tapered off from the rapid increase of the 1950s and 1960s while the movement away from the urban centers of Chicago Heights and Park Forest accelerated until these municipalities for the first time actually lost population while the townships of Crete and Monee grew significantly along with small urban areas within the district.

The socioeconomic structure remained essentially unchanged except for a larger influx of minorities, and the economy continued its movement away from heavy industry to a service and retail oriented economy. For a college sensitive to community needs, these trends had a bearing on the educational services provided by the institution.

The trend toward stability in population growth during the 1960s and early 1970s continued and accelerated toward the end of the decade. This phenomenon is clear from an examination of the following chart which shows the township population figures between 1960 and 1980.

TOWNSHIP POPULATION GROWTH

	Bloom	%	Rich	%	Crete	%	Monee	%	Dist.	%
1960	70,530	---	35,258	---	11,737	---	5,131	---	122,656	---
1970	94,757	34.3	44,801	27.0	15,270	30.1	7,240	41.1	162,068	32.1
1980	101,127	6.7	58,804	31.2	20,357	33.3	10,985	51.7	191,273	18.0

The college district continued to grow in population between 1970 and 1980 but at a significantly slower rate. From a growth rate of 32.1 percent between 1960 and 1970 the rate of increase was down to 18.0 percent, or nearly half that of the previous decade. Total population of the district was 191,273, much lower than projected estimates advanced by college officials in the 1960s.

Besides a decline in population growth, the direction that people were moving continued a trend of the last two decades--but at a significantly faster rate. Movement was from the larger urban centers in the northeastern section of the district in Bloom Township into the township of Monee, the southern border of Rich Township and Crete Township. A close look at a second chart demonstrates this trend.

Municipality Population Growth/Loss

Municipality	1970	1980	% Gain	% Loss
Chicago Heights	40,844	37,026		-9.3
Crete	4,656	5,417	+ 16.3	
Country Club Hills	6,920	14,676	+ 112.0	
Flossmoor	7,846	8,423	+ 7.3	
Ford Heights	5,000	5,347	+ 6.4	
Glenwood	7,146	10,538	+ 42.0	
Homewood	18,871	19,724	+ 4.5	
Matteson	4,741	10,223	+ 115.6	
Monee	940	993	+ 5.6	
Olympia Fields	3,478	4,116	+ 18.3	
Park Forest	30,716	26,222		-14.6
Richton Park	2,558	9,403	+ 267.5	
Sauk Village	7,479	10,906	+ 45.8	
South Chicago Heights	4,932	3,932		-20.2
Steger	8,104	9,269	+ 14.3	
University Park	1,748	6,245	+ 257.2	

In the early 1970s population continued to gravitate toward the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad inter-urban electrical line from the north central part of the district to the southwestern corner as it had for nearly a century. But the growth rate was uneven with some municipalities decreasing their expansion and others increasing significantly. Homewood, Flossmoor and Olympia Fields slowed their growth in the 1970s by an average of 70.6 percent. Matteson and Richton Park, however, increased their rate of growth by an average of 81 percent.

At the same time the population expansion in the northeastern section of the district which developed rapidly in the 1960s tapered off during the 1970s. Glenwood, which grew in population by 740.1 percent for the greatest expansion of any municipality in the district during the 1960s fell off to a 42 percent increase during the 1970s.

The most dramatic shift in population, however, came in the northeastern section of the district where the two largest urban centers, Chicago Heights and Park Forest along with South Chicago Heights, actually declined in population during the 1970s. South Chicago Heights dropped 20.2 percent while Park Forest declined 14.6 percent and Chicago Heights fell back by 9.3 percent. These last two adjoining urban centers continued to maintain their position as the center of population, holding a combined 33 percent of the district's total.

During the 1970s the large central cities in the community were giving way to the sprawl of small urban areas within the district. This, however, was not a development peculiar to the Prairie State College community. Census figures of 1970 and 1980 show this development took place in many large metropolitan centers. In analyzing the metropolitan area of Chicago, demographers identified Chicago Heights and Evanston as examples of new central cities in the metropolitan Chicago suburbs.[62]

The population profile of the college community also continued to shift as it had in the previous decade in terms of minorities, but where Hispanics were the most rapidly-increasing minority group during the 1960s African-Americans again became the fastest growing minority during the 1970s. Furthermore, these African-Americans were located in sections of the community besides those places where they had resided in previous decades. The following chart indicates this shift.

MINORITY POPULATION CHANGES 1970-1980

	Bloom			Rich			Crete			Monee		
	1970	1980	%	1970	1980	%	1970	1980	%	1970	1980	%
White	81.7	78.3	-3.4	98.1	89.3	-8.8	96.5	91.5	-5.0	96.2	69.9	-26.3
Black	13.0	14.6	+1.6	1.0	7.9	+6.9	1.0	5.1	+4.1	1.3	27.1	+25.8
Hisp.	4.7	6.4	+1.7	0.5	1.9	+1.4	2.3	3.2	+0.9	1.7	2.1	+0.4
Other	0.6	0.7	+0.1	0.4	0.9	+0.5	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.8	0.9	+0.1

Prior to 1970 African-Americans settled mostly in Bloom Township, in the eastern section of Chicago Heights and in East Chicago Heights. In the early 1970s this pattern shifted when African-Americans began to move from established African-American communities of Robbins and Phoenix into Matteson, Park Forest and University Park.[63] Influx of African-American people was especially noticeable in Monee Township where the African-American population increased 25.8 percent during the 1970s. This was largely due to the settlement of University Park whose 1980 population was about 50 percent African-American.[64] Other municipalities in the college community such as Glenwood in the northeast and Country Club Hills in the northwest also experienced growth in African-American population.[65]

Thus during the 1970s the college community experienced some, if uneven, integration. One example was Park Forest where the African-American population increased from 2 percent to 12 percent.[66] In 1973 the village established a program of integration maintenance defined as "the use of educational and service programs to encourage the continuation of integration in the community."[67] The program remained consistent through changing village boards and provided a case study for the integration of a suburban community.

Hispanics continued their influx into the college community during the 1970s but at a reduced pace from the previous decade. They continued to settle for the most part in Bloom Township, especially in the Hill region of Chicago Heights and in Sauk Village. During the decade their influx into Bloom Township increased by 1.7 percent and barely exceeded that of African-Americans. In Rich Township they increased in proportion to the total population by 1.4 percent and in Crete and Monee townships by 0.9 percent and 0.4 percent respectively. In these townships they located in rural areas.[68]

Other minorities did not increase their proportion of the overall population to any significant degree. These groups include native Americans and Asians. For many decades these minorities provided only a tiny proportion of the total population of the college community.[69]

In terms of age the population was growing older during the 1970s. The Bureau of the Census classifies age in three categories. These are 18 to 20, 21 to 64, and 65 and over. During the 1970s the average age in each of these categories increased for the college community. For the four townships the average gain in each category was as follows: 18 to 20 years, 0.9 percent; 21 to 64 years, 6.51 percent; and 65 and over, 1.8 percent.[70] This indicates that the baby boomers of the 1950s were nearing adulthood, and senior citizens were beginning to comprise a greater proportion of the college community.

But of the many changes underway during the 1970s perhaps the most significant was the economy which continued its shift from heavy industry such as steel-making to service and retail occupations. Again this was not a shift peculiar to the Prairie State College community. But Chicago Heights had been one of the leading centers of industrial and steel production in Illinois and a part of the vast Calumet steel complex, one of the greatest in the world, for nearly a century, and the significance of this turn was bound to have a profound effect.

Those employed in manufacturing occupations dropped 23.1 percent from 51.9 percent to 28.8 percent during the decade while service employment increased 19.1 percent from 7.7 percent to 26.8 percent during the same time. In Rich Township the switch in service occupations was nearly as much, up 20.6 percent from 9.8 to 30.4.[71]

Besides the shift in direction of the economy there was also the movement of retail business away from the central district of municipalities into shopping malls which continued. Within the college community this movement began with Chicago Heights in the 1960s, and by the end of the decade left the center of that city with only a few businesses.

The movement continued in other locales during the 1970s, but in some municipalities aggressive action arrested the movement. Homewood met the challenge directly. During the mid-1970s the business district of this village lost a major grocery chain, a coin-operated laundry and dry cleaner, a women's apparel shop, a men's clothing store and a family shoe store. Long-term store vacancies began to appear. Village government and business interests, however, launched a study of the problem and in 1978 adopted a tax-increment financing plan which allowed the municipality to freeze tax assessments in redevelopment areas and then use the additional tax revenue generated to pay for public improvements. Although occupancy changes continued in the downtown area, long-term vacancies were halted.[72]

Other villages were not so successful in dealing with their business areas. Park Forest waged a long and arduous struggle to maintain the standards of its shopping plaza only to see it deteriorate as the decade closed. This was an ironic turn for the nation's first post-World War II shopping plaza.

Continuation of these trends and changes during the 1970s, however, did not alter the comprehensive stature of the Prairie State College community as a microcosm of the state of Illinois and the nation. If anything these changes merely reinforced that structure. Socioeconomically, the district contained within it the fourth wealthiest and the second poorest communities in the state. Occupying a salient part in one of the nation's largest heavy industrial areas, the college community provided the basis for a case study of the shift of the nation toward a new economy, and the consequences on the community. Ethnically, it remained a mosaic melting pot of the United States during the 20th century.

Influx of minorities in the 1960s and 1970s enriched the structure and strengthened its microcosmical sample.

All this carried implications for the kinds of educational services that a community college, committed to the community, ought to supply. The changing nature of the economy would require training for those entering service employment rather than production or industrial employment. Retraining would also be needed for those left unemployed in the switch. The aging of the population would require services for more senior citizens. The influx of minorities would require basic training and skills training to move them into the mainstream of America. The changing role of women presented another implication for educational services. As the baby boomers of the 1950s moved toward adulthood, women were becoming free of child-raising responsibilities and were looking for employment and careers elsewhere. They, too, required restraining and upgrading of previous education. To carry out its mission, a community college needed to provide these educational services.

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

CONTINUING THE TASK OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s the college continued its commitment as a community college to offer transfer, occupational/technical programs. During this period the transfer program continued to occupy the core. Enrollment continued to grow, however, at a much slower rate than occupational/technical programs. During this time the college also inaugurated a program in Instructional Services aimed at the problem of remediation and became one of three colleges in the nation recognized for efforts in meeting this issue.

Providing Transfer Programs

During its first few years the vast majority of educational services which the college provided were transfer programs, meaning those courses which paralleled the first two years of courses at four-year colleges and work which students transferred to these colleges to continue toward a baccalaureate degree. As the college moved into its second decade, however, the number of students completing transfer programs diminished; this decline continued steadily in the late 1970s albeit transfer programs continued to occupy a substantial part of the college's educational services.

In recognition of completing the first two years of baccalaureate parallel courses, the college awarded the Associate in Arts degree. This recognition had its origin with William R. Harper in his concept of the senior college as separate from the junior college. The degree was intended to encourage students to enter one of the several senior colleges at the University of Chicago; for others who did not intend to continue their formal education, it represented a terminal degree.

Stanford University in its early years under David S. Jordan applied the concept. The degree is authorized for junior colleges and places the official stamp of approval on junior college education as definite collegiate accomplishment.[1]

When the college adopted a "single baccalaureate oriented" position in the mid-1970s it provided a few required courses and a number of electives. This number increased within the next few years.[2] By the end of the decade the Associate in Arts degree requirements consisted of 62 credit hours in four areas and electives in two others. The four areas were communications or English, six credit hours; humanities, nine credit hours; science and mathematics, 11 credit hours; and social science, nine credit hours. The two areas of electives were general, four credit hours; and interest electives, 23 credit hours.[3]

All four-year colleges in Illinois, except the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, and many in other states, recognized the Prairie State College associate degree and accepted students at the junior class level when they transferred. At the University of Illinois, however, transfer credit was evaluated course by course. Moreover, the university did not permit Prairie State College students who had more than 12 hours and less than 62 hours to transfer there. During the summer sessions many University of Illinois students took courses at Prairie State and this course-credit was acceptable at the University of Illinois but could not be calculated for grade-point average.

During its first decade the pattern for Prairie State College transfer students remained consistent. Three four-year universities which attracted most of these transfers were Illinois State University at Normal, Northern Illinois and Southern Illinois. Eastern and Western Illinois universities attracted a few, and fewer still transferred to the University of Illinois. When the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus opened in the early 1960s it attracted many transferees. With the opening of Governors State University in the early 1970s the pattern shifted. This university was established mainly to serve as a capstone for community college students in the city of Chicago and south suburban region, and thereafter most Prairie State College transferees moved to this institution. During the 1970s Prairie State College transferees in rank order followed this pattern: Governors State University; Illinois State University at Normal; Northern Illinois University; Southern Illinois University; University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus; Eastern Illinois University; Western Illinois University; and the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana). There were, however, variations in this order from year to year.[4]

After transferring, Prairie State College students at most four-year colleges in Illinois did as well as or slightly better than those students who began their college training at these institutions. At Illinois State University the mean grade-point of Prairie State College transferees in nine subject areas was 2.93 as compared to 2.58 for native Illinois State students (those who began their college training at that institution), and 2.60 for all other community college transferees.[5] Another study at Southern Illinois University produced similar results. At this institution Prairie State College transferees in nine subject areas had a mean grade-point average of 2.55 compared to the same average for native Southern Illinois students.[6]

At the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana), however, Prairie State College students did not achieve as well. Nine Prairie State College transferees at this institution had a mean grade-point average of 3.48 as compared to 4.02 for all continuous University of Illinois students and 3.79 for all community college transferees.[7] These studies, albeit limited, demonstrate that Prairie State College transferees held their own at most four-year universities in Illinois.

Despite success of transferees the transfer programs continued to decline in terms of graduates during the late 1970s. This decrease began in 1967, the year that the Associate in Applied Science degree was first awarded. In that year Associate in Arts graduates represented 69.7 percent of all those winning degrees and certificates.[8] By 1976 the figure dropped to 34.3 percent and by 1982 it was down to 27.2 percent.[9] From 1976 through 1982 the number of Associate in Arts graduates at each commencement averaged 32.4 percent although the total number of Associate in Arts degrees increased by 6.1 percent and reached an all-time high of 166 in 1977.[10]

Providing More Occupational Programs

Another mission of a comprehensive community college as prescribed in the Act of 1965 is to provide occupational, semi-technical and or technical courses that lead directly to employment. Long before it became a part of the Illinois community college system, Prairie State College offered these courses; during the late 1970s the college continued to add such courses in significant numbers.

In the early 1960s the college began to offer occupational programs leading to certificates. For several years these programs comprised one year of schooling. To meet the shortage in the health field, two-year nursing and dental hygiene programs began. Child development, police and fire science programs followed.

During its first decade the college offered only the Associate in Arts degree for students intending to transfer to a four-year college or for those wishing to increase their formal education beyond high school, if not further. There was, however, no degree recognition for those students who were taking vocational and technical programs comprising an equivalent number of semester hours. Thus, in the middle 1960s the college introduced the Associate in Applied Science degree to recognize students completing programs in the occupational and technical field. The degree was first awarded in 1967 to three students.[11]

The increasing number of candidates earning this degree represents a surge in popularity of occupational and technical programs. Between 1967 and 1975 occupational and technical programs grew dramatically in terms of Associate in Applied Science degrees. During this time the number of these degrees awarded increased from three to 184 or 603.3 percent as compared with Associate in Arts degrees which increased from 53 to 140 or 164 percent.[12] In the same period a total of 902 Associate in Applied Science degrees were awarded as compared to 883 Associate in Arts degrees.[13] During this period Associate in Arts degrees represented 42.1 percent of all degrees and certificates awarded.[14]

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the number of two-year programs increased to 18 and, although the degree remained essentially a terminal one for most students, many students were transferring to four-year colleges for bachelor degrees. Fields to which students were transferring included electronic and mechanical engineering, nursing, dental hygiene, child development, teacher aide and graphic and interior design.[15]

While two-year programs leading to an Associate in Applied Science degree continued to attract most students in the technical field (86.2 percent) between 1967 and 1975, one-year programs increased by 167 percent.[16] One of the most popular of these one-year courses was the apprentice programs begun in 1974 for industrial electricians. In a short time tool and die, welding, machinist and millwright courses were added. While employed, students attended classes in the craft for which they were training and received journeyman status required by the Department of Labor.[17] This program enlarged the college's service to industry and the community. For the director of occupational and technical programs, initiation of this program was one of his most rewarding experiences.[18]

Form 1967 to 1975 occupational and technical programs and the number of people completing them gained steadily.

During the late 1970s their popularity continued to grow. Between 1976 and 1982 the college granted 1,427 Associate in Applied Science degrees or 47.3 percent of all degrees and certificates granted which represented an increase of 5 percent over the previous decade.[19] In 1978, there were 223 Associate in Applied Science degrees granted, representing 55.6 percent of all degrees and certificates at that commencement.[20]

One-year occupational programs also continued to gain in popularity during the late 1970s from 54 in 1976 to 138 in 1982 for a gain of 155.5 percent. In terms of total degrees and certificates awarded, one-year programs represented 20.3 percent between 1976 and 1982, up from 16.7 percent in the period 1967 to 1975.[21]

To accommodate this increased interest in occupational and technical programs between 1976 and 1982, 34 courses, or 41.9 percent of all courses added to the curriculum, were in the occupational and technical area. This was nearly twice the number of courses added in the adult and continuing education area, the next category in terms of total courses added during the same period.[22]

One of the most popular occupational programs in terms of enrollment was nursing. This popularity led to a problem in 1976 when 240 students applied for 100 openings. "The unfortunate fact is that there are just too many applicants for too few spaces," the president stated. "This has caused a lot of grief, anxiety and frustration."[23] As a consequence, admission requirements for the program were reevaluated and communications clarified.[24] Other popular occupational and technical courses included dental hygiene, welding, automotive services and computer science.[25]

While the popularity of occupational and technical programs grew at Prairie State College these programs continued to meet accreditation or accountability standards. The dental programs, however, were an exception when their accreditation was threatened. This was corrected in December 1975 when the American Dental Association reinstated full accreditation.[26] Otherwise the occupational and technical programs continued to enjoy full accreditation.

In the health field a large part of accreditation depends on how an institution's graduates perform in state or national examinations. In Illinois a nursing student who passes the State Board Examination can practice as a registered nurse. From its beginning, the Nursing program at Prairie State College provided students who succeeded in passing these qualifying examinations. In 1980 all Prairie State College nursing graduates passed the State Board Examination with an average of 89 percent. This score exceeded the mean score of all those taking the Illinois test and the national examination.[27] Dental hygiene students also performed well in national examinations. In 1977 and 1978 the entire class passed the certification test with an average score exceeding the national mean.[28]

Most of the occupational and technical programs at Prairie State College are accredited by the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (DAVTE). Annual reports are required and periodic campus visitations are conducted by DAVTE to ensure accountability and qualify for federal and state funds.[29] Such a campus visit produced a strong report for the college in 1980. A 17-person evaluation team "felt that the occupational programs at the college were outstanding and meeting the needs of the community and students."[30] Several departments were commended including Business and Information Systems, Dental Auxiliaries, Human Services, Nursing and Industrial Technology.[31]

Occupational and technical programs at Prairie State College did indeed grow in popularity. They were of high quality and maintained standards of accountability as the decade of the 1970s drew to a close.

Providing for Basic Educational Needs

Having dealt with underachievers by expanding tutorial services in the late 1960s, Prairie State College became a model for such programs in the 1970s until a sudden cutoff of federal funding threatened to devastate the program. By relying on support and funding at the state level in the meantime, the college was able to press on with its remedial or compensatory education program into the 1980s but not without internal confrontation.

When the main building was occupied in the fall of 1975, the remedial program was firmly established. It had been in operation since 1969 and was serving more than 1,000 students while attempting to bridge the gaps in background among the diversified students attending the college. Because Prairie State College had been one of the first community colleges to attack the problem of low achievement, by the mid-1970s its program began to attract national attention. A large room on the northeast corner of the third floor was provided for the program.[32]

The remedial, or Instructional Services, program at Prairie State College began in 1969, but the need for such a program traces to the opening of the institution. From the outset and throughout its first quarter-of-a-century the college operated as an open-door institution. Liberal entrance requirements allowed students to try everything and fail if they must. Together with a high-failure rate, the attrition rate, meaning percentage of dropouts, soared. The college was thus confronted with a problem in the late 1960s of either abandoning standards and allowing high attrition to continue or to attempt to raise competence to a level in the basics where students could resume educational training in programs leading to certificates and degrees. The college chose the second course and began a tutorial program with 32 students, financed entirely with local funds. Recognizing how widespread the need for tutoring was throughout the state, the Illinois Community College Board appropriated "disadvantaged student aid" funds in 1973.[33]

Success of the Prairie State College Instructional Services program attracted attention of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) in 1976. The college was one of three in the nation which the HEW department recognized for its efforts in meeting the problem of remediation. HEW thus provided a four-year grant from its special services or academic assistance component. The initial sum of $55,000 increased annually until the grant reached $119,144 in 1980.[34] About this time the name of the program was changed to Personalized Learning albeit the objective and philosophy remained the same.

Bolstered by HEW funding, the Personalized Learning Program expanded. Staff increased to six full-time people, eight part-time people and five student aides. A reading specialist was appointed and tutoring was expanded to include specialists as well as peers and volunteers. New equipment was installed. Machine tutors were installed to provide for module, filmstrip, tape and slide instruction. Laboratories were conducted to improve study and writing skills. A course in English as a Second Language was started to enable non-native Americans to read, write, and understand the English language.[35]

As the program enlarged its identity increased until it received national recognition as a model program. The director and staff were selected to make presentations at national educational conferences on remedial training. The Prairie State College program was one of three in Illinois and one of 58 colleges in the nation selected for evaluation by the Systems Development Corporation.[36]

With substantial funding, the program continued to advance. Support, however, consisted mostly of federal grants. Between 1976 and 1980 three sources provided funding. These were the HEW grants, Illinois state funding and local funds. The proportion of funding between these three segments, however, developed unevenly during the four-year period. Total funding increased 75.9 percent but of that figure, the HEW share grew by 107.6 percent while the state level increased 74 percent and the college share increased by 40.6 percent.[37] By 1980, federal funds were providing 62 percent of the cost, with the college furnishing 29 percent and the state 9 percent.[38] Local funding was falling behind with federal and state sources providing most of the support.

With such dependence on federal funding the college was shocked to learn that an application for renewal of federal support was denied and HEW funding terminated as of 30 June 1980. Notice of termination came on the day that current funding expired.[39] "We were devastated," Katherine Gavin, the director, said. "We had helped many institutions set up programs using our forms and we still see them," she stated.[40] As the shock wore off, however, the cutoff of funds did not seem so surprising. There were reasons for the termination.

First was the general cutback in federal funds that started and grew to larger proportions during the 1980s. "There's a crunch nationwide for money," the director said. "More and more institutions nationwide are competing for part of this federal money."[41] Besides the general cutback in federal funds another reason connected with the program itself explained the termination of funding. Originally, federal funds were made available as "seed money" meaning funds to be used to begin a program which would be phased in and become a part of the institution's curriculum rather than utilized primarily to sustain an existing program.[42] This, the HEW believed, had not been accomplished at Prairie State College.

Despite the cutoff of HEW funds the Personalized Learning Program continued albeit on a smaller scale. "In retrospect," the director stated, "it may have been the best thing that happened because we should not have been totally dependent on federal funds."[43] Local funds which supplied 29 percent of the program funds were still available as were state funds which comprised 9 percent of the funds.[44] The program limped along on one-third of its previous funding and continued to serve 683 students during the 1980-81 academic year.[45]

While the Personalized Learning Program at Prairie State College suffered a serious setback with the cutoff of federal funding, remedial education was gaining support at two other levels. First was the recognition throughout the state of Illinois that remedial education at the college level was becoming a serious problem.

Four-year colleges, including the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana), confronted the issue in the 1950s and 1960s when the era of mass enrollments began. These large enrollments turned up many students lacking competence in basic subjects of reading, writing and mathematics, especially writing. These deficiencies compelled the four-year colleges to install remedial courses to improve competency that would allow students to carry on coursework toward degrees.

The advent of the community college system in the 1960s alleviated the problem somewhat for the four-year colleges, but the problem persisted, and in the 1970s pressure developed on the Illinois Board of Higher Education to assign remedial education to the community colleges. Consequence of this pressure came in Public Act 81-803 (19 September 1979) which mandated, "Boards shall develop guidelines which: (1) place the emphasis on postsecondary remedial programs at public community colleges and (2) reduce the role of the state universities in offering remedial programs.[46]" What Prairie State College had been doing on its own for nearly a decade was now required by law. The law also set time limits on the transition of remedial programs to community colleges. "By 30 June 1981," the law stated, "the board shall report to the General Assembly the progress made toward this transition in the emphasis on remedial programs at the post-secondary level..."[47]

A second level where the need for remedial education was recognized was among the faculty and staff. Soon after creation of the Recruitment and Retention Committee, this group recognized that one of the compelling reasons for high turnover, or a high dropout rate among students, was most of these students lacked the necessary academic skills to succeed. At one of its first meetings and with a unanimous vote, the committee moved "that a committee consisting of members of the business, Mathematics, English, .Social Science, and Technology departments, and with Drs. H. R. Andrews and K. Gavin, to be chaired by members within that committee, develop a curriculum of developmental courses to be presented to the various departments in September of 1979 for implementation in the spring of 1980."[48]

This motion made it quite clear that the faculty recognized a need for remedial education. Implementing a program, however, was not accomplished without much contention and intra-college strife.

Late in the fall of 1979 a Student Profile report reiterated the need for remedial education. At the direction of the President, a Developmental Education Task Force Committee was formed late in 1980 and began meeting in January 1981.[49] Composed of 44 members representing the faculty, administration and supportive staff "in conjunction with the board's wishes, the committee was formed to study, plan, and recommend a Prairie State College system of Developmental Education."[50] As mandated by Public Act 81-803, a plan needed to be submitted by 30 June 1981.

When the task force committee began there was complete agreement that a developmental education program was needed at Prairie State College to improve academic skills of disadvantaged students to a level where they could succeed in regular academic programs. At subsequent meetings, however, differences arose about how developmental education should be handled. The issue was essentially philosophical. The plan advocated by the instructional services director and largely supported by the administration, was to establish a developmental division with its own staff. "Statistics have shown," the director argued, "that ... a department or division or component for developmental education ... is a better way to go."[51] The faculty essentially felt that each department should handle developmental education for those subjects within its discipline. Another factor affected the faculty, especially those in the English and Mathematics departments which would be most affected by a separate division for Developmental Education. This was job security. Many students in a Developmental Education division would reduce enrollment in English and mathematics and thus reduce the number of faculty needed in those departments. This fear, albeit not outwardly admitted, had to be a factor in the faculty opposition to a separate division.

Confronted with a deadline of 30 June as mandated by Public Act 81-803 and with pressure from the Illinois Community College Board and the Board of Higher Education to present a program, the trustees advised the administration to pull it (the developmental education recommendation) out of the curriculum committee and pass it without them."[52]

The faculty presented the trustees with a petition. This noted that insufficient time had been allowed for a thorough, informed and balanced discussion of the issues and requested that the trustees postpone approving the program until the task force could prepare a plan acceptable to the faculty. Concerns about student enrollment, admission qualifications, student selection, program structure and the lack of financial commitment by the college were also noted.[53] Thus confronted with a time deadline, a recommendation for a Developmental Education program and an opposing report, on 18 June 1981 the trustees approved of a Division of Developmental Education 12 days before the deadline.[54]

The Developmental Education program simmered for several months until a special trustee meeting agenda in December called for adoption of three courses for the program. This set the stage for another board-administration and faculty confrontation. The meeting began with presentation of the administration's plan. To allay anxieties that a separate division would jeopardize existing faculty appointments it was made clear that positions would be advertised and selection could be made from current faculty members.[55]

A senior faculty member representing the curriculum Committee responded with a prepared statement which was distributed. She outlined the committee's organizational structure, membership and procedures. She continued by detailing how the proposed courses were presented to the committee, lack of departmental approval, disagreement on student selection, lack of time for discussion of the courses, administrative participation, votes taken on first and second readings, requests for revision of courses, the need for a special board meeting and violation of the Curriculum Committee procedures.[56] She urged the trustees not to approve the courses. She was joined by the Faculty Senate president who also opposed approving the courses. The trustees, notwithstanding, moved to approve three courses (Fundamental English, Fundamental Reading and Computational Skills).[57]

The college was not pleased with the turn of events. "The college," said the president, "is acting upon mandates by the state, as well as upon expressed need for remedial courses."[58] He went on to say that "time is of crucial importance."[59] He expressed "regret" that the administrative recommendation, a break with tradition, could not win full faculty blessing and support and regretted the necessity of calling a special board meeting for the action.

The faculty had regrets too and continued its opposition. The next day an upset faculty member wrote to the ICCB to protest. "Never before," he wrote, "has the administration knowingly presented a course to the Board of Trustees, and the board of trustees approved a course that the faculty rejected in the Curriculum Committee. The administration and the board of trustees have completely disregarded the internal mechanism for examining and testing curriculum proposals that has been accepted and used until now."[60]

This evoked a quick rebuke from other members of the faculty who supported approval of the Developmental Education courses. Six faculty members signed a letter reading that "we would like to have the record show that we supported the approval of the developmental education courses."[61] These six were all African-Americans. As members of a minority these faculty members were aware that African-Americans and other minorities provide a large portion of those in need of remedial education. These black teachers recognized that failure to adopt Developmental Education courses continued this neglect.

The college admonished the upset faculty member for the letter to the state board. "The official lines of communication to the ICCB," wrote the president, "are through the president's office."[62] The college also rebutted the impression that recommendations of the Curriculum Committee carried legislative force. "Note that the policies statement specifies," the rebuttal stated, "that the Curriculum Committee 'will recommend programs and courses' and does not define its role as a legislative one. Although Curriculum Committee recommendations have routinely been accepted, the statement does not bind the administration of the college to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum Committee."[63]

Despite contention surrounding the approval of the program and courses, the work of remediation at Prairie State College continued under the designation of Developmental Education. Remediation was attacked on two fronts: First, Developmental Education would provide non-transfer credit in courses designed to improve student skills up to college-level work. Within a few years four courses were added to the original three. These included a second level of instruction for English and computational skills; a second and third level were added to fundamental reading. The instructional staff expanded to 12.[64] Second, the Personalized Learning Program, as an extension of Developmental Education, would continue to provide help for students who desired to maintain high grades and for those who lacked basic skills and needed substantial assistance, or specific, temporary help.[65]

Important as remediation is, however, the concept continued to carry a stigma. The phrase Developmental Education was adopted to remove this blemish. As the 1980s began those in this division were stressing "pre-college courses" as a description.[66] In time, another description may be used. Again the poet said it best: "O, be some other name! What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet; So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd." (Romeo and Juliet, II, i).

The process whereby Prairie State College adopted a Developmental Educational program provides another example of the community college paradox. There was no dispute that remedial education was needed. The issue was what kind of a program should be provided and the process to be followed in adopting the program. A four-year college governed by its own board could have afforded the time to work out the solution. A secondary school could not have met the problem as well as Prairie State College did. But the Illinois community college system through its coordinating state board and the Board of Higher Education, imposed time limits that constrained the Prairie State College trustees. Without meeting the deadline for approval of the program, funding and the entire program of remediation would be jeopardized. As the college attempted to resolve the issue more restraints were imposed upon it simply because it was a community college in the Illinois system. The King of Siam might say "it's a puzzlement." For Prairie State College it was a paradox--a community college paradox.

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

PROVIDING MORE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Besides increasing course offerings at the main campus during the late 1970s and early 1980s the college extended itself into the community by providing extension centers. These extension centers offered courses like those at the main campus as well as other types of community education, including non-degree and non-credit courses. Other community services included cooperative units and commissions to attack community problems. From the beginning the college was a pioneer in cooperative efforts with other community colleges and thus able to provide leadership in this area.

Providing Community Education and Services

Along with transfer and occupational training, Prairie State College provided community education and services during its first two decades. During this time, however, these activities were not as extensive as other instructional offerings but in the middle 1970s Community Education and Services expanded.

Of all community college functions, perhaps the broadest is community education, which embraces an array of instructional forms. These include extension courses for credit which, as the name implies, extend to sites away from the campus. Adult or continuing education is another form of community education. This type of instruction has many facets. It may or may not carry credit. Students in adult or continuing education are usually older than college undergraduates and have a wide range of school experience. Some hold degrees while others have not completed high school. Adult and continuing education students for the most part attend intermittently or part-time with their goal being short-term education rather than a degree certificate.

Throughout occupation of the interim campus the college offered extension courses at Bloom and Crete-Monee high schools. For a while there were extension courses at Rich and Homewood-Flossmoor high schools which were discontinued, then reinstated in the late 1970s. During this time continuing education courses were offered at East Chicago Heights and the east side of Chicago Heights.[1] In 1979 the college presented an extension course in American history at the Park Forest Library. This course presented an individualized instruction format in which students moved at their own speeds. This method provided videotaped lectures for students to view in the library or tape cassettes which could be taken home for listening. Small discussion sessions were held in the library.[2]

Extension courses were also offered at Beecher but not without reviving strained relations with Kankakee Community College which had subsided after the Beecher district decided to remain independent of a community college. Following the Beecher decision, daytime or full-time students from Beecher continued to attend the community college of their choice.[3] Most attended Prairie State College. Most evening, or part-time students, however, attended Kankakee Community College which offered night classes in Beecher. In 1976 Prairie State began an evening program at Beecher, increasing these offerings the following year.[4]

Kankakee protested vehemently on two points: First, it claimed that Prairie State College had not obtained permission from the ICCB to offer extension courses in Beecher;

and, second, the same teachers were teaching the same courses for both Kankakee and Prairie State College.[5] Representatives of both colleges, however, worked out an agreement to avoid course duplications and faculty assignments.[6] Both colleges thus continued to offer extension courses at Beecher while most daytime Beecher students continued to attend Prairie State College.

Besides extension courses and continuing adult education the college offered other kinds of community education. Among these were general studies, or non-degree oriented courses for institutional credit or personal fulfillment. These courses also increased dramatically in the late seventies. In 1976 general studies courses were offered at five places off-campus, with 10 places offering 50 courses by 1982.[7] Among the general studies offerings was a course entitled: "Starting Again." Designed for persons who needed direction in their lives because of some change such as divorce, widowhood, relocation, career change, children leaving home or retirement, the course drew widespread attention.[8]

Seminars of various types was another form of community education which the college offered. One of these was an annual World Affairs Conference seminar in which the college was one of a consortium of sponsoring educational institutions. Nationally-prominent speakers were featured on these programs to which students and the public were invited with minimal registration fees.[9] The college also participated in coordinated energy educational campaigns such as those of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.[10]

In addition to providing community education the college offered community services, or programs for personal interest and for the good of the entire community. These came about in different ways. One was a program which developed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (Public Law 93-203) adopted by the college in 1975. Purpose of this law (CETA) was "to develop and create job opportunities and provide training, education and other services needed to enable individuals to secure and retain employment."[11]

Originally 13 people, all senior citizens, enrolled in the Prairie State College CETA program, but this expanded to 24 within a few weeks. The dire need for such a program in the college community and the entire south Cook County area soon became apparent. As so often in the past this area-wide need brought Prairie State College and Thornton Community College into a cooperative planning effort. This cooperative effort drew the attention of the U.S. Department of Labor which selected the two colleges to become a part of a national consortium of model work education councils. This Work Education Council between Prairie State and Thornton became one of 21 such councils in the United States designed to attack the problem of unemployment.[12]

PSC's CETA program, which grew dramatically, was serving 180 people by 1982. Besides providing job-training and relocation services, the college allowed eligible clients to enroll in one-year certificate programs.[13]

But the college went further by creating a work-program of its own. This program was essentially one of summer campus-maintenance which began in the spring of 1977. It was conveniently entitled, "Project Beautification."[14] During its first year of operation more than 50 people were employed and many tasks were accomplished including curb painting, landscaping, installation of drainage systems, debris cleaning, building painting, development of playground areas, tree planting and redevelopment of athletic fields. It also provided many community services including movement from unemployment to employment; work experience and employment in jobs with dignity and purpose; development of skills in landscaping; renovation and remodeling of physical facilities; soil conservation and environmental flood control.[15]

Based upon this initial success the program was renewed and expanded during the summer of 1978 employing 311 youths classified as economically disadvantaged between the ages of 13 and 21. Each week participants worked four days and were assigned to the college one day to attend various self-realization activities designed to stimulate self-awareness, value-choices and decision-making related to career development. Instructional modes consisted of movies, film strips, testing and field trips.[16] The program was continued a third and fourth summer under sponsorship of the Cook County Office of Manpower Services.[17]

For the college the success of these programs was gratifying for at least two reasons. First the benefit to the community was substantial and second there was no cost to the college, since the Federal government funded the program.[18] The college served as coordinator which opened the way to further development of community services.

In view of Prairie State College's successful CETA programs and in need of a coordinating unit to assess the vocational needs of the Cook County Manpower Services, CETA solicited the college to develop a CETA Vocational Assessment Center and provided a $72,463 grant. This was increased to $250,000 and extended through 1979.[19] Functions of the center were counseling, remedial help and placement of unemployed.[20] Appropriately, the Prairie State College center was named the Job Bound Center. Two other awards were given to Oakton and Morton colleges but Prairie State's program was largest and received the majority of funding.[21]

With a staff of nine professionals, two clerical persons and a director, the Job Bound Center opened in September 1978 in Building I on the north campus and exceeded expectations during its first year. Over 2,400 persons were outreached, and more than 1,400 assessed. In addition, more than 300 were placed in unsubsidized employment while more than 100 were referred for training. A substantial funding grant enabled the program to continue a second year.[22]

Continued success through a third year, however, brought pressure for larger facilities to accommodate the expansion. Two programs were added for the third year and staff was increased to 20 professionals, three program assistants, three clerical persons and a director.[23] In the fall of 1980 the college began a search for a larger facility, but six months of effort proved futile and the college vacated the program from Building I.[24] Other factors contributed to relocation. The Cook County Manpower Office sought a facility more centrally located and outside the college district which complicated college operation of the program. Furthermore, the prospects for a federal funding freeze prevented the Manpower Service Office from entering into a leasing agreement.[25]

With efforts to find another location proving futile and realizing the benefits to the community of such a program, the Prairie State College trustees reconsidered and presented a proposal to keep the Job Bound Center on the campus.[26] This would reduce the cost of instructional facilities and make the venture more efficient than at other sites.[27] The Manpower Services Office accepted this proposal and the Job Bound Center continued to offer its community service with the cooperation of Prairie State College.[28]

While the college developed the Job Bound Center with a thrust from above at the federal government level, it developed other programs with a thrust from below where the initiative came from the community level. One was the Industrial Development and

Placement program. Started in the fall of 1979 this program developed out of the apprentice training program.[29] Its purpose was much the same as that of the Job Bound Center--to serve as a liaison with local business and industry to find types of training needed and to place people in jobs after completion of their training. The college carried out this function by structuring programs, presenting them to business and industrial firms with estimates of individual costs to employees who desired to attend and then conducting the training.[30] The program served hundreds of apprentices in its first two years of operation.[31]

The college also provided services for special groups within the community, including about 15,000 senior citizens. Buttressed with a community services grant from the Illinois Community College Board, the college selected a senior faculty member as coordinator and launched a Senior Citizens Service program in the fall of 1976.[32] One of its first projects was publication of a Senior Citizens Directory which went through two editions of 8,000 copies each in a single year before a third edition was added.[33]

The program cooperated with the South Suburban Council on Aging in presenting seminars and workshops in the community. Other activities included development of a district transportation network, publication of a medical directory and development of an information repository on community resources of value to senior club activities.[34] The college also extended tuition waivers for those 62 years of age or older.[35]

Other community services were provided, such as a College Testing Center installed for community use. Among the variety of tests given were General Educational Development; College Level Examination; American College Testing; entry-level tests for Nursing, Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs; and the Real Estate Licensing examination.[36]

As a community service the college put its television studio equipment at the disposal of the community to videotape special events. One of these was the visit of people from San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy, who came to Chicago Heights in a city-exchange arrangement. Another was a recording of the ceremony recognizing the "All American City" award to Park Forest for the second time.[37]

Dental Hygiene students provided community service by visiting community elementary schools to demonstrate proper dental care, and the Art program provided monthly exhibits of prominent artists to the public. A speakers bureau was maintained for community use. A special program was presented in automobile mechanics for women employees of a local company.[38]

Besides providing services, the college provided facilities for community use and leased facilities in the community for college program. Arrangements were made with the Chicago Heights Park District for the college gymnasium, softball fields, basketball and tennis courts to be utilized for recreational purposes.[39] Facilities were provided for the Illinois National Guard to utilize Building C as a recruiting and educational center.[40] In turn the college leased facilities from the community. The Child Development program was moved to the Ridge School in Homewood under a lease agreement.[41] Besides moving the college into the community, this action represented a tax saving for the district. Because of declining enrollments, there was consideration to close Ridge School; and because of deterioration the Child Development program could no longer be operated without extensive repairs. In leasing the Homewood school taxpayers were saved the difference of repair costs which exceeded the lease agreement.

Providing Cooperative Services

In the late 1970s, buoyed with Illinois Community College Board encouragement and state support, the college increased its cooperative offerings with other community colleges and began several such programs with Governors State University.

Beginning in the early 1960s the college and Thornton Community College worked out several cooperative course-offerings to the mutual benefit of both. In the mid 1970s the Illinois community college system added its support to cooperative programs and urged their development. Among these agreements were interdistrict, proprietary, dual-shared and consortium pacts.[42] Already engaged in several of these accords, the college increased its participation.

Perhaps the most common type of cooperative arrangement is an interdistrict agreement. In this plan, one institution which has a strong program allows one or more colleges to enroll their students usually on an in-district tuition basis. Essentially this amounts to an interdistrict sharing arrangement.

Prairie State College participated in several of these in the late 1970s. One of these was in Child Development in which the college provided instruction through cluster classes within the Thornton, Kankakee and Joliet districts.[43] The other was in Dental Hygiene in which the college shared instruction with Thornton, Moraine Valley, Joliet and Kankakee.[44] In two other interdistrict agreements Prairie State shared programs offered by another college. One was with Kankakee where the college had students enrolled in Medical Laboratory Technology and Cosmetology; and another was with Thornton where Prairie State students enrolled in Biomedical Electronics Technology and Mechanical Design Technology programs and building Maintenance certificate offerings.[45]

Another type of interdistrict cooperative agreement is a reciprocal one, meaning that two colleges allow an equal number of students to take courses offered at the other institution.

Prairie State College had such an arrangement with Moraine Valley Community College in which the college had places reserved for 10 students in the Moraine Valley Respiratory Therapy program while in turn Moraine Valley had 10 places reserved in the Prairie State Dental Hygiene program.[46] In this way Prairie State College became able to respond to urgent requests from hospitals in the district for students trained in respiratory therapy without the expense of starting a program of its own.

Another cooperative arrangement is a proprietary agreement whereby two colleges share the costs of a program or venture.

In one of these the college joined with Thornton in operating a mobile information van, funded by a public service grant.[47] In this arrangement the two colleges stocked a van with information pamphlets about offerings at both institutions which were distributed throughout both districts.

Dual agreements are those in which two colleges share a program. This was the type of cooperative arrangement Prairie State College and Thornton operated frequently from the early 1960s. During the 1970s at least three more of these arrangements were carried out. They were the Work Education Council, the Fire Science program, which Prairie State operated, and a Lecture Workshop.[48]

The college, however, did not restrict its cooperative efforts to educational services. There were consortiums in which Prairie State worked together with other community colleges and high schools to reduce costs of supplies. To reduce the costs of workmen's compensation insurance the college entered a consortium with Thornton, DuPage, Morton, Oakton, and Triton community colleges.[49] In an attempt to reduce the cost of paper supplies the college entered a consortium with at least eight elementary and high school districts forming the South Suburban School Purchasing Cooperative.[50]

In addition to cooperative programs with community colleges, Prairie State turned toward Governors State University and began several interinstitutional cooperative arrangements with that institution in the late 1970s. As designed in the master plan for higher education in Illinois, Governors State served as a capstone for the community colleges in the city of Chicago and suburban region. In 1972 it was one of the aims of the Higher Education Cooperation Act (Public Act 77-2813) to encourage interinstitutional cooperation. As the law stated it was to provide "financial assistance to programs of interinstitutional cooperation in higher education ... to implement the policy of encouraging such cooperation in order to achieve an efficient use of educational resources, an equitable distribution of educational services, the development of innovative concepts and applications and other public purposes."[51]

The first cooperative program which the college launched with Governors State University was aimed at providing quality education for disadvantaged students, an issue Prairie State had been dealing with for nearly a decade. Governors State shared the problem and in 1976 the two institutions launched a three-year, cooperative project.[52]

Soon thereafter the two institutions began work on a cooperative program to ensure close articulation of the associate in arts and bachelor's degree.[53] Known as the "Two Plus Two" program it began with business offerings. The plan assured that the community college student who had taken a specific business career path could continue that path at Governors State and earn the bachelor's degree in two full academic years. The plan was geared for part-time students as well as full-time commuting students.[54] In a short time similar agreements were extended to include 10 programs.[55]

Besides cooperative programs for coursework, the two institutions worked together on a student intern program. In this program Governors State students served as teaching, counseling and administrative interns at Prairie State College.[56]

Thus Prairie State College, which glimpsed the benefits of cooperative programs, continued to develop these types of programs in the late 1970s. They benefited everybody. They were efficient because they reduced duplication of courses. They provided flexibility by allowing students to take courses that otherwise would be canceled or not offered. They improved communications between institutions as students became aware of strong programs in other colleges, thus contributing to increased enrollments.

In supporting and developing these cooperative programs Prairie State and other community colleges demonstrated another resourceful facet of community colleges: the flexibility and services which colleges of this type can provide higher education.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

PROVIDING MORE STUDENT SERVICES

Services for students increased substantially during the 1980s at Prairie State College. These increased services were in financial and scholarship aid and student services. During the late 1970s financial aid increased dramatically; by 1982 federal and state help amounted to more than 90 percent of student financial aid. This produced two consequences. On the plus side, the large array of government grants formed closer ties with the local financial community. High default numbers, however, provided a negative aspect to this vital economic need for students. With the occupation of the main building student services increased to include more complete cafeteria service and student recreation. Student theatrical programs were introduced and activities increased as did student participation.

Services: More of the Same and Some New

The pattern of student services established at Prairie State College in the early part of the decade continued in the late 1970s. The array of support, including financial and scholarship help, counseling, and food and recreational accommodations, increased to meet the needs of a growing enrollment. Financial and scholarship aid increased dramatically while a few additional services were added to accommodate a changing student population.

By 1980 the main problem for Prairie State College students was financial need. Although more older students comprised the student body the majority remained young. Twenty percent were 19 years of age or younger and 52 percent were in the 20 to 29-year bracket. They were not unlike students in four-year colleges throughout the country who were confronting rising college costs. Like at most community colleges, many came from low income families; and 75 percent of them were employed part-time. Their tuition had increased 300 percent between 1966 and 1976 until it was the fifth highest of any community college in Illinois (and would rise another 26.6 percent in the next five years).[1] If their living costs were less than their resident-college counterparts, their transportation expenses as commuter students were greater.

Students, however, were not without financial assistance. There were financial aid programs already in place such as the G.I. Bill of 1944, enhanced by the Vietnam Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-508), which continued to provide the largest single source of government financial aid throughout the late 1970s. In 1976, 980 students or 16 percent of those enrolled received benefits from this source.[2] This number stabilized between 600 and 700 during the next few years. Financial assistance from this source reached a peak of $4.1 million in 1978-79.[3] The college, however, did not receive this amount. It did, nevertheless, realize tuition payments from veterans whose payments in turn were matched by state funds.

Work-study provided another ongoing source of financial aid for students. This program, like the G.I. Bill, had provided student funds for more than a decade. Minimal by comparison with the G. I. Bill, this program nevertheless supplied $37,660 for 52 students in 1977-78.[4] The program furnished part-time employment for students who were paid minimum wage until reaching the annual amount of the award.

Another source of student financial aid since 1972 was the Basic and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants program created by the Educational Amendments Law (Public Law 92-318). Purpose of the program was to provide financial assistance for college students through outright grants and loans based on need. Under this legislation, students whose families could not contribute $1,600 a year toward college costs were eligible for a grant between $200 and $1,800 a year or 50 percent of college costs, whichever was less. National Direct Student Loans up to $3,000 were also available to qualified borrowers based on need and availability of funds.[5] In the late 1970s this program was contributing noticeably to Prairie State College student needs. In 1977-78 28 students were receiving a total of $8,800 from Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and three students were receiving $1,125 from National Direct Loans.[6]

Valuable and substantial as these grants and loans were, the recipients remained for the most part low-middle income students. They were not the only ones needing financial assistance. Inflation was bearing heavily upon middle income students and forcing many of them out of the college market.

President Jimmy Carter drew attention to the problem in February 1978 when he announced a major expansion of federal student assistance programs to assist students from moderate and middle-income families in meeting the constantly growing cost of obtaining a postsecondary education. In his statement, President Carter said, "Today the cost of sending a son or daughter to college is an increasingly serious burden on America's low and middle-income families. From 1967 to 1976, in just a 10-year period, the cost of a college education increased 77 percent."[7]

In November 1978 Congress enacted the Middle Income Student Assistance Act (Public Law 95-566) which extended financial aid to middle-income students and also made students eligible for subsidized loans, regardless of income.[8] Millions of students on campuses throughout the country were affected. Jack W. Peltason, president of the American Council on Education, former chancellor of the University of Illinois, and author of the textbook which Prairie State College government students studied for more than two decades, assessed the law's impact. "The Middle Income Student Assistance Act," he said, "represents the biggest single infusion of funding for middle-income college students since the adoption of the G. I. Bill at the end of World War II."[9]

For Prairie State College the effect of this law was perhaps even more dramatic. David G. Whitaker, then director of financial affairs and veterans aid, described the results. "The Middle Income Student Assistance Act," he stated, "...really flung open the doors, as it were to financial aid, allowing students to get guaranteed loans with no income requirements. The family could be making any amount of money and the student could still get a guaranteed loan....It increased eligibility dramatically..."[10] Results were swift and startling. In 1978-79 the college's guaranteed loans totaled only $22,000 but the next year reached nearly $400,000.[11] The increase in student aid was dramatic, having tripled between 1974 and 1979. The figure doubled again within five years. By 1982 the total for financial aid programs reached $2.1 million.[12] The method of processing these grants and loans fomented closer ties between the college and the local financial community. These institutions granted the loans through cooperation with the college which furnished information, acted as dispersing agent and kept records of the students' progress.[13]

Scholarships continued to provide a second form of substantive aid for students as they had from the beginning of the college; but where the government increased its share of student financial aid in the late 1970s the pattern for scholarships was completely the opposite.

During its first two decades the largest amount of scholarship aid for Prairie State College came from state sources which provided two types of scholarships. First there were Illinois State Scholarships. The State Scholarship Act (House Bill No. 380, 21 June 1957) created scholarships for qualified high school graduates and residents of Illinois to attend colleges. The law also established a State Scholarship Commission to administer the program.[14] In 1969 the state of Illinois established Illinois Veterans Scholarships (Public Act 76-46)) for Illinois veterans who resided in the state just prior to entering service and returned to the state as residents within six months after service.[15]

Though the state provided most scholarship aid during the first two decades, there was always local effort. There were several individual scholarships. Among the first were the Phillip Pressendo Memorial and the Harold H. Metcalf Scholarship. The Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields Women's Club provided scholarship aid as did Rotary and Kiwanis clubs from Chicago Heights, Park Forest and Glenwood. The Prairie State College Teachers' Union also sponsored a scholarship.[16] The Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago provided an unusual scholarship in which the main criterion for selection was how well a student achieved his or her goal in the face of obstacles, rather than academic achievement.[17]

Scholarship recipients were generally expected to attain a degree or certificate and maintain at least a minimal grade point average; but the main criterion was need.[18] The need factor, however, could be complex. "It is not dissimilar," stated the director of financial aids, "to that (criteria) which bankers use when asked for a car loan or a home mortgage."[19]

In the late 1970s the pattern for scholarship aid shifted rather quickly from state to local sources. In 1979 the trustees established a Trustee Scholarship program to award two scholarships each year to students from each of the eight high schools in the district. One of these scholarships went to a student enrolling in the transfer program and the other went to a student in the career program.[20] These Trustee Scholarships, however, were based entirely on academic achievement regardless of need.

This was clearly designed to correct the image of a community college as one which attracts only those students who can not meet entrance requirements at more "prestigious" colleges. "The purpose for the Trustee Scholarships," stated a trustee, "was to attempt to encourage the higher scholastic achieving students from the underlying high schools, to come to Prairie State College rather than go away to college. There has always been the concern that community colleges only get the ones who cannot get into senior institutions."[21]

Private support for scholarships received added backing in the late 1970s from other sources. One was the Prairie State College Foundation which established a scholarship fund as one of its permanent college projects. This fund comprised part of the foundation's endowment fund which attracted other large private scholarship donors. Among these private scholarships were those of Harriet S. Murray, Clare Luecke, Lynn Rudy and Diane Crowe.

Many other private and local group scholarships followed. In 1981-82 privately-funded scholarships doubled.[22] "One of the big things I have been most pleased with," stated the financial aids director, "is the increase for private scholarships."[23] Not only did the amounts grow substantially, but "virtually all of these awards take into account academic achievement."[24] Thus, along with the substantial and dramatic increase in financial aid from the federal level was a solid increase in scholarship aid especially at the local level.

However, these programs were not without negative consequences. The first drawback to increased federal financial aid was a large number of defaults on loan payments. Grants required no repayment but student loans, like any loan, carried with them the responsibility of repayment, usually beginning after graduation. Within a year after the Middle Income Students Assistance Act went into effect the Prairie State College student-loan default-rate reached 62 percent. This was the second highest default-rate of any college in the state, a dubious distinction.[25] The college took prompt action, employed a collection agency and reduced the default rate to 23 percent in less than a year.[26]

Defaulting on loans was not confined to students; the state of Illinois shared this frailty. In fiscal 1981 the Illinois budget for the Illinois State Scholarship Commission came up with a deficit between $2.7 and $3.4 million which translated to a $23,000 shortfall for Prairie State College.[27] This was not an uncommon predicament for Illinois state funding. It happened often in state appropriations for community colleges. Based on estimates, budgets are prepared, but when state funds fall short the deficits require supplementary appropriations, usually passed in a special session, to raise the funds. Sometimes, however, supplementary appropriations are not made. And there was no supplementary appropriation for the deficient scholarship fund.

To eliminate this deficit, the Illinois State Scholarship Commission reduced its awards by $100 for students having an award of less than $1,000.[28] Thus the trustees had two options. They could either have the district absorb the costs or bill the students. The board decided to bill the students. This decision was not easy because nearly one-fourth of the scholarship students were recipients of welfare.[29] Subsequently, however, the amount of the deficit was reduced to $9,000 and the number of scholarship students reduced from 223 to 93.[30]

Another discounting factor was the expense of administering the financial aid and scholarship program, worthy as it was. Since most of the costs came from the college's ongoing operational budget the program was relatively expensive. Besides an administrative director, there were two advisors, two clerical people, an administrative secretary and a receptionist who handled the program.[31] In terms of benefits to students, however, the costs were minimal.

The college provided other student services, including counseling. In this category the college added an Adult Re-entry program aimed at meeting the needs of the approximately 70 percent of its students who were 25 years of age and older. Unassociated with an academic environment for many years or never having attended college, these students found this program beneficial in helping them overcome anxieties.[32] In addition to counseling, an Adult Re-entry Club was formed to provide a support group for older adults.[33] Another service added was the Discover System to assist students in making career choices. The Prairie State Foundation provided a computerized guidance system for this program.[34]

Food, recreation and a bookstore were other services which were enlarged when the college moved into its main campus building. A cafeteria located at the south side of the mall area of the main building provided a much larger and convenient food service than the college had ever supplied. Vending machines augmented these services. A recreation room provided billiards, ping-pong and video games at the southeast corner of the main building. These enhanced services provided a welcomed improvement over the restricted area and services of the interim campus.

Several student services were added with the move into the main building. Among these were accommodations for handicapped students. Though toilet facilities required for the handicapped in building codes were included in construction of the main building, other accommodations for the handicapped had been long neglected. A 10-member committee consisting of representatives from the community, student body, faculty and other facets of the college recommended accommodations for the handicapped. These included a special access door at the northwest corner of the technical building addition.[35]

Another new student service added after the move into the new building was a Campus Ministry program, designed to provide students with counseling and a liaison with area churches of all denominations.[36] Still another new service was publication of the "Job Connector." Appearing twice a month under supervision of the Industrial Development and Placement program, the purpose of the publication was to provide a link between available jobs and the community.[37]

Activities: More of the Same and Some New

Like student services, Prairie State College student activities carried on the same during the late 1970s as in the first part of the decade. The main campus building had little effect on modifying students' behavior while they were not attending classes. Socializing between classes continued albeit in larger and more attractive surroundings. Extra-curricular activities were much the same; a few were added, but the perennial problems remained.

With occupation of the main building students found a much larger lounge area available for socializing than the one on the interim campus. At the south side of the mall were dozens of tables. Besides food-vending machines a cafeteria provided a wide assortment of food choices. In the southeastern corner of the building were billiard and ping-pong tables along with pin ball machines. The Student Activities Office was located in this area and later other services were added. Among these was a dot-print computer sign conveying announcements and news items throughout the day. Moving to the main building certainly provided more attractive and expansive accommodations for student socializing.

Before noon and extending to early afternoon the cafeteria area was crowded; at times there was standing room only. During the noon hour live entertainment was often provided. This included combos, one-act plays, magic shows, dramatic readings and billiard experts. Some of these the Student Activities Office sponsored while others were student improvisations.

In the evening the cafeteria and lounging area began to fill before classes. Since evening classes met for 2.5 hours, a break was taken midway through the class. The lounge became heavily frequented during the break and closed soon after the end of classes or about 10:00 P.M.

Despite more attractive and spacious surroundings, students continued to confront at least two perennial problems during the late 1970s. The first was student apathy, an obstacle since the college formed. After a year of getting oriented to the main building it was decided to hold a homecoming dance at the conclusion of fall 1976 semester. But in view of lack of interest the event was canceled. The student newspaper affirmed that the proposed homecoming theme said it all: "The Way We Were indicates that Prairie State College is the same as it has always been, apathetic."[38]

After nearly two decades, however the students no longer seemed dismayed or confused over the problem. They had an explanation. "Students themselves," wrote the editor of the student newspaper, "are disinterested due mainly to the commuter campus system of receiving education within one's own community, while continuing to work and concentrate on more pressing social obligations." He continued, "a junior college may be compared to a shopping mall. You go there to shop, as people go here to gather credits, not to really get involved."[39] Another editor carried the argument further: "This [apathy] might be inherent to the two-year college system. By the time a student group organizes itself to complain about something, it is time for them to move on and the issue dies with the turnover. This applies," he wrote, "to the lack of consistency in student activities as well."[40] Maybe it was not so confusing after all, the editor felt, "perhaps all those early editorials were misguided in thinking that student apathy is a bad thing, when actually it is nothing more than a perfectly understandable fact of student life."[41]

Another student problem "that never seemed to go away" was parking space. During the main building's first year, parking space was an issue for everybody at the college including visitors. But with the construction of more than 2,000 off-street parking spaces, or one space for at least every three students enrolled at the college by late 1976, this was hardly a justifiable complaint. The main objection was that not everybody could park within a few steps of the entrance. If one was prepared to walk from the north parking lot across Vollmer Road, parking space could be found. The problem was more acute during the first two weeks of a semester, but as classes became less well-attended, more parking space became available. Furthermore, handicapped parking space was provided outside the rear door of the Vocational/Technical wing.

Again the editor of the student newspaper seemed to grasp the problem in reasonable perspective. "This paper," he wrote, "has carped about the parking problem ever since man invented tar...maybe it is just a 'safe' issue that can be complained about without anyone getting in too much trouble."[42]

Despite some persistent problems many activities were open to students. One of these was Student Government which, despite apathy, continued, albeit only a few students participated in holding offices. Then there was the *Prairie Statement*, the student newspaper, which continued. Underground newspapers, however, disappeared with the lessening of tension and turmoil in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Student theater productions continued to be the activity which attracted the largest number of students. For more than a decade Prairie State College stage plays were performed in various locations throughout the district, due to lack of space on the campus. It provided a mixed blessing. On the one hand it allowed student thespians a chance to involve the college in the community, a valuable contribution; but on the other it restricted their training in staging not to mention the difficulty in keeping track of production schedules. "Frankly," stated the performing arts chairman, "even our audiences had trouble finding us, we moved so much."[43] The problem was alleviated somewhat with construction of Building K, but the large lecture room which served as the performing arts center was shared with classes.

Movement to the main building provided an opportunity to construct a Performing Arts Center. Completion of this structure provides a classic example of college and community cooperation. After consulting technicians it was agreed that a Theater Arts Center might be constructed in Building J. Developed by Richard Peterson and Margaret Powers of the Speech Theater department and Raymond C. Marthaler, director of physical facilities, the proposal was too attractive for the trustees to refuse. The plan called for a flexible theater seating 200 patrons, and included two classrooms, a Green Room for post-performance receptions, an office, costume room, dressing rooms, set designing area and public bathrooms.[44] The community became involved when a department store donated carpeting, mirrors and clothing racks while three retired south suburban contractors donated their time to supervise employees hired under the CETA program. Thus the Prairie State College Theater Arts Center came into being at a bargain price of one-fifth the cost of a private contractor. The center was inaugurated 23 June 1978 with the production of "Truly Newley."[45]

This new Theater Arts Center allowed the Drama department to enhance its repertory. The Theater Box of the Center provided facilities that allowed for "rolling repertory," a concept whereby several productions could be cast and staged in quick order, simulating professional experience. After previewing shows before audiences, actors and directors could add, delete and refine productions before subsequent presentations.[46]

Enhanced with the advantages of a "rolling rep" arrangement, the college enlarged its repertory offerings. Many students participated in stage productions and many more attended. Performers included the college president in the production of "Harvey."[47]

Other theater arts programs continued. These included the presentation of original plays, which students wrote and directed themselves. Results were varied. On the whole, the quality was good. "It is fascinating," wrote a critic, "to watch these students grow in their abilities from one production to the next. Their report cards should reflect As for effort. Some are talented enough to become valuable additions to any of the splendid area drama groups."[48] The Prairie State College Troupers also continued to present productions at grade and high schools throughout the area. These were not always without incident. The theater instructor, for instance, fainted on stage before an elementary audience on a warm spring afternoon much to the dismay of the young audience.[49]

Efforts were made in the late 1970s to reinstate intercollegiate athletics, but these failed. In 1972 the trustees discontinued intercollegiate athletics for several reasons: There were difficulties in securing sufficient players for each sport; there appeared to be little interest on the part of the student body and the community for intercollegiate athletics; there were inadequate facilities for a program at the college; and the teams tended to lose far more often than they won.[50] When this decision was made, however, the trustees suggested that when the main campus was occupied a feasibility study be conducted to determine if intercollegiate athletics should be resumed.[51] Thus a committee composed of administration, faculty, students and staff was formed to consider the issue in July 1978.[52]

Proponents continued to argue that "the big factor is that it [intercollegiate athletics] would be a force that would unite our student body ... if we have intercollegiate sports we would gain students and to a limited degree it could be used as a tool of recruitment for the college."[53]

But from the community came louder cries of opposition than when the issue was debated the first time. Now the widely-read sports editor of the local press joined the opposition. "For those who say Prairie State College needs an athletic program," he wrote, "I hate to take away their gusto, but the college needs intercollegiate sports like Rod Carew needs batting lessons." He argued further, "Prairie State can find enough bodies to fill out a football roster and more than enough to put a basketball team together, but will anyone--those members of the Student Senate, the Rotarians with the questions, show up for the game? They didn't before and they won't again. On top of that, will Prairie State football and basketball teams find anyone they can beat? Not very often ... Forget it Prairie State ... It's a waste of time."[54]

After several month's consideration the committee recommended to the trustees in May 1979 that the college reinstate four sports, two for men and two for women, in an intercollegiate athletic program. The trustees took the recommendation with the enthusiasm of a feline facing a spray of water. The board, however, agreed to accept one sport for women and one for men, depending on budget and other priorities.[55] Nearly a year later budget factors continued to deter the trustees. "I would be at this time," stated the chairman, "extremely reluctant to say anything else other than, what can we do to expand our intramural program."[56] Thus the board reaffirmed its earlier decision not to sponsor intercollegiate athletics.

Intramural athletics, however, continued on an expanded basis. This program provided competition in flag football, tennis, golf, volleyball, basketball, boxing, wrestling and cross-country. In regional intramural competition, the college performed well.[57]

Hockey enthusiasts, however, were not disheartened with the board's decision. If the college would not authorize intercollegiate athletics there remained the club basis for competition. This was tried, albeit rather unsuccessfully in football, early in the 1970s; but with hockey, results were much more encouraging. Against extreme difficulties 15 Prairie State College hockey players supplied their own funds to rent the Homewood-Flossmoor ice arena during the late hours of evening and the small hours of morning to practice. Their determination produced fine results, and they won second place in the 25-team Senior Men's Division.[58]

Other clubs provided the basis for more extra-curricular student activities. During the 1977-78 year there were 23 active student clubs.[59] These included the Phi Theta Kappa honor society and the Alpha Beta Gamma national honorary society for business students. Established at Prairie State College in 1975, the purpose of this society was to recognize and encourage scholarship, provide opportunities for development of leadership and service, promote an intellectual climate for the exchange of ideas and stimulate continuing academic excellence for business students.[60]

Minority clubs continued to thrive and support their interests. The Black Student Union held annual "Black History" weeks and annual educational awards programs.[61] This group also contributed to a recognition of the slain children in the rash of Atlanta, Ga., killings in 1981.[62] The Latino Club raised funds for minority scholarships, sponsored speakers and musical groups.[63]

Student excursions were increasingly popular during the late 1970s. These included bus trips to Florida during Spring Break and special ski weekends during the winter in northern Michigan. Several times during the season the Student Activities Office sponsored bus trips to major league baseball games. The office also sponsored a "Women's Week."[64]

Student activism, not uncommon in the late 1960s and early 1970s, remained quiet through most of the late 1970s until the Iranian government stormed the American embassy in Teheran and took Americans hostage in November 1979. This evoked a student demonstration. While chanting slogans such as "Free Americans" and "Iranians go Home" they burned a home-made Iranian flag. Despite the enrollment of several Iranian students at the college, which added incendiary elements to the protest, there was no violence.[65]

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

APOGEE AND DISMAY

After two decades of struggle and strife Prairie State College had reason to believe that the worst was over and the future would be brighter. Two events, exactly three months apart, provided substance for this assumption in the late spring and summer of 1978. On 17 May after five failures, the college passed a tax referendum that seemed to insure immediate if not long-range financial security and on 17 August the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools approved and extended Prairie State's accreditation for five years thus enhancing the college's position as a strong academic institution. The sense of joy, however, was short lived. Even before the additional tax revenue materialized, the ravages of inflation were at work to take away the hard-won gains. Internal episodes added unwanted strife.

A Tax Referendum Succeeds at Last

While other problems seemed to draw more attention during the first few years in the new building, the persistent financial issue grew more serious. The problem always seemed difficult, and with occupancy of the new building it became critical, before passage of a tax referendum provided relief.

During the last five years on the interim campus three factors enabled the college to limp along in meeting the financial problem. First was increased state aid. Between 1971 and 1977 state flat-grant aid and apportionment increased from $15.50 per semester credit hour to $20.14. Full rates, however, were not always paid. From 1974 through 1976 the state flat rate was budgeted at $19.20 but only $18.12 was paid in 1974-1975, and only $16.00 was paid in 1975-1976. While the flat-grant aid increased, significant improvement was also made in categorical aid. For the first time since the establishment of the Illinois community college system, special grants were appropriated for equalization, public service programs, disadvantaged students, and supplemental aid for vocational/technical education programs. Prairie State shared in all of these grants.[1]

Increased tuition furnished a second source of financial relief. By 1971, tuition was up to $12.00 an hour. In 1971-1972, it was hiked to $14.00 an hour; in 1975-1976 to $15.00 an hour; and in 1976-1977, it was raised to $17.00 an hour, the maximum allowed by law. So Prairie State students continued to pay a greater share of the cost of their college education than junior college students throughout Illinois.[2]

Tight money management was a third factor which enabled the college to limp along without more local tax support. All capital equipment and expenditures were paid out of the bond and interest fund (resulting from the 1967 building referendum), not operating revenue as was usual.[3]

As expected, the move into the main campus building brought greater financial costs, and in the fall of 1976 the board again assessed the increasing financial problem. The college ranked 24th out of 37 Illinois junior colleges in assessed evaluation. The tax rate of 12 cents per 100 dollars of assessed evaluation compared with an average rate of 19 cents for Illinois junior colleges.

Furthermore, the law required that to establish a new junior college the local tax rate must be at least 22.5 cents with a legal maximum of 75 cents. The most logical option called for returning to the community to approve raising the tax rate 10.5 cents to bring it up to the 22.5 cent-minimum required for a new college. Three previous referenda had failed, but there seemed no other choice. So the board set a fourth referendum for 23 November 1976 to be held as a special election. The proposal sought a 10.5 cent increase.

Strategy this time called for holding the referendum on a Tuesday. Rather than the 55 voting precincts for board elections, only eight voting places were set. One was in the college. Reasoning was that a voting place in the college would attract a larger number of students, and at the same time, the greater distance to the polls would discourage the negative voters from making the effort to cast their ballot. In any case the strategy boomeranged. The proposition carried only 39.4 percent of the vote, the strongest approval of any referendum to date, but still short of the majority needed for approval.[4]

This rebuke was hard enough to accept, but the low turnout of 4,350 voters indicated that the community did not find the college attractive enough to take the time to vote. Still the financial crisis persisted. Almost in desperation the college went to the taxpayers less than six months later to raise the tax rate 10.5 cents.

This time the college decided to combine the referendum with the school board elections on 9 April 1977 in expectation that this would increase voter turnout. Unfortunately for the college, in addition to the many school districts electing board members, a grade-school tax referendum was on the ballot in one of the underlying districts. The grade school referendum passed; but the college proposal carried only 37.6 percent of the vote. The turnout was larger, perhaps in view of all the board elections and the grade school referendum, but college support actually dropped by 1.8 percent from 39.4 percent to 37.6 percent.[5] Thus a fifth attempt at a local tax referendum failed and the financial problem grew worse for Prairie State College.

By summer of 1977 the financial condition of the college was critical. The deficit accumulated from past years was $209,000. The budget for 1977-1978 projected a further debt of at least $215,000, making a combined deficit of at least $424,000 by completion of the 1977-1978 fiscal year.[6]

Prospects for additional funds seemed dismal. Federal resources were always small; there seemed little chance for increases. Previous funding had been mainly for supplemental projects, not for operations, and in most cases required college matching funds. Getting more funds from state resources was unlikely. A proposal to increase by 4 percent the credit-hour grants seemed doomed to another failure. Student tuition could not be increased at this time; The college was levying the highest tuition of any community college in the state. An increase in local tax support again seemed the best, if not the only solution for additional revenue. The rate of 12 cents per 100 dollars of evaluation remained the lowest operating tax rate for any community college in Illinois. Prairie State's real estate taxes were bearing a significantly lower share of total revenue than were such taxes in other community college districts.

Though no official board decision had been made on another referendum attempt, the administration began to consider it late in the summer of 1977. It was clear that before another referendum could be proposed a serious review of past failures was in order. Examining these setbacks revealed one common omission: There was never a thorough, well-developed organization. Of course, there were always a few speeches before service groups, some publicity on the radio and in the local press. Only a few people, however, had been actively involved in preparing the referenda campaigns. There was never involvement of all parts of the college--board, administration, faculty, staff and community--in a coordinated effort. Somehow the local community had to be convinced that the college was an asset, and additional tax money was the only way to keep the institution operating at its present level. The college needed to sell itself to the community. This was the main thrust of a metropolitan television station in a special news program on Prairie State.[7]

Organization and involvement of the entire college and communication with the community to get across the critical financial condition confronting Prairie State College was the challenge. Initiative began at the top, permeated through the administration, faculty, staff, and student body and moved into the community in various ways. In September 1977, two committees were formed, one inside the college, the other involving both the college and community. These were the Referendum Control Committee and the Citizens Audit Committee.

The Referendum Control Committee consisted of faculty members, and its main responsibility was to identify voters who would support another college referendum and get them to vote. One of the painful experiences of the past two failures was the large number of vocal supporters who did not vote. To get control of these "no show" supporters the Referendum Control Committee sought names of "yes" voters from the full-time and part-time faculty. Names of "yes" voters were solicited from past Prairie State College students. The names of Teachers' Union members living in the college district were supplied as another source of "yes" voters. These names were computerized and sorted according to voting precincts. Each committee member assumed responsibility for collecting at least 20 names from approximately 20 full-time faculty members who in turn were requested to get as many names of supporters as they could from the 20 helpers on their list. Hopefully, the end result would create a geometrical progression or a "snowball" effect. The objective was to gather a list of at least 9,000 supporters. If 75 percent of these people, or 6,750 turned out to vote, victory would be assured.

To gain support and get the vote, cards soliciting help were distributed to faculty, students, and staff. In addition a dozen college students were hired to solicit by telephone, potential "yes" voters. This group called approximately 15,000 households on six separate Saturdays in January and February. Cards were printed listing the voting place of each precinct and mailed to "yes" voters. The committee met once every two weeks.

The Citizens Audit Committee consisted of 153 people from throughout the college district. This committee was charged with reviewing college operations to determine if the college was fulfilling its commitment to the community, how it should continue and how it could secure additional resources. More than 60 people from all of the 16 communities comprising the district took part in the audit sessions.

The conclusions, as presented to the Board of Trustees on 6 October, noted that Prairie State College was "implementing the goals of the college within the financial constraints available and that it is more than adequately fulfilling the role prescribed for it by the community when it was established in 1966, that the college should continue to offer programs in the areas of transfer, vocational technical, general studies, and community services, and that the Board of Trustees of the college should pursue all possible means of increasing the revenue of the district and promoting the college to the maximum degree to make it a viable institution."[8]

With preparations already underway for several months, the trustees officially recommended on 16 March 1978 that a sixth referendum be held on 17 May 1978. Though the proposed tax rate increase was to be the same as the previous failed referendum--from nine cents to 15 cents in the Educational Fund and from three cents to eight cents in the building and Maintenance Fund for a total of 11 cents--there was a modification. This change called for phasing in the tax rate over a period of four years at a rate of three to four cents a year. This gradual phasing in of the new tax rate together with the reduction in interest rate for the building bonds would mean that by 1988 the total tax rate would be reduced to the same rate as paid in 1977.[9]

Within a few days after board action calling for a referendum, two additional committees were formed, one to help directly with the referendum and the other designed to assist indirectly with passing the referendum. The first of these was the Citizens' Committee for the Referendum. Purpose of this group was to raise money, obtain publicity and secure precinct captains to help get out the vote. The second group which sprang into action was the 20th Anniversary Committee. Its purpose was to organize a series of programs from each of the four high school districts and the parochial high school in the Prairie State College district. These programs were designed to publicize the contributions of each of these high school districts toward the college in the way of students and services. Each of the high schools presented a program on successive Sundays culminating with a 20th anniversary celebration of the college.

A month before the referendum date the campaign accelerated. Names of supporters began to mount. From a total list of 942 early in January, the list approached 7,000, weeks before the referendum. Phone calling accelerated. Cards were mailed to all those in the supporters list advising them of the poll locations and time of voting. Community leaders endorsed the referendum in radio messages. Administration, faculty and staff began to discuss the referendum quietly but extensively among themselves and with people from the community. Three weeks prior to decision-day the administration detailed the campaign at a general faculty and staff meeting. Students volunteered in increasing numbers each day to help as poll-watchers, door-knockers and drivers. An air of reserved confidence and hope permeated the college campus.

Wednesday, 17 May, the sixth referendum day arrived. The weather was delightful. Indeed, it was a fine spring day. Neither proponents or opponents could claim the elements conspired against them. Polls were opened from 11:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M. Poll-watchers, precinct-captains, door-knockers and phone-callers moved into action. Hopes were high as the polls opened, but by early afternoon a feeling of doubt emerged among supporters. As precinct coordinators began to turn in their voting lists an inordinate number of those on the "yes" list had not voted. Late in the afternoon the outcome looked dismal in view of the small number of supporters who had voted.

Part of the explanation for this low turnout of supporters at this time was because most of the "yes" voters were working people who would not return to the community until evening. The questions then became: "Can we move the necessary number of 'yes' voters to the polls between 4:30 and 8:00 P.M.?" Every available person (student, faculty, staff) was pulled from whatever job he or she was doing and put on the streets to knock on doors and confront people at train stations. In addition, the telephone-reminder campaign was stepped up. Then suddenly a serious problem arose. At 6:00 P.M. the Prairie State College phones went out. Phone personnel had to be sent home to continue calling. At 7:56 P.M. the phones came back, four minutes before the polls closed but too late for a last minute drive.

At about 8:30 P.M. returns began to come into the college mall where a large group had gathered. Early returns showed defeat in some of the precincts where previous referenda had lost, but the margin of loss was not nearly as large as in earlier referenda. Then Rich Township precincts, always supportive of college referenda, began to report. Support was greater than in any previous referendum. Homewood-Flossmoor district also showed a definite victory trend. The news seemed almost too good to believe in view of past failures. Even the Crete-Monee district, which had never supported a college tax referendum, carried.

Shouting reached a crescendo with announcement of returns from each succeeding precinct. The final tally showed that the referendum carried 4,585 to 3,514, or 56.6 percent of the vote.[10] Victory was achieved. After five consecutive defeats the community had come forth to insure at least temporary financial stability for the college. Services would not have to be cut. Widespread dismissals and cutbacks would be avoided.

After the exhilaration of victory subsided the question arose, especially among college personnel and friends of the college: Why did a sixth tax referendum succeed after five previous failures? Quite clearly the referendum succeeded because of a strong and widespread cooperative effort among individuals and groups within the college and in the community. It was undoubtedly the most thoroughly and widespread community effort the college ever undertook. A month before the decision faculty began to volunteer their services in many ways; names of supporters began to appear daily; friends of the college launched telephone campaigns of their own; and staff and students moved into the breach. Momentum had a snowball effect. In the community, various groups enlisted support in getting out the vote to augment work of the Referendum Control Committee. Other institutions, like Governors State University and high schools and grade schools throughout the district, issued memoranda to their faculties and staffs urging support. Those at the college assumed that this widespread community backing must have been out there through the five previous unsuccessful attempts at a tax referendum. Yet the support didn't materialize until the sixth try. The referendum of 17 May 1978 was a college and community triumph.

Short-Lived High Hopes

Institutional morale at Prairie State College was never higher than during the late spring and early summer of 1978. Exactly three months after passage of the tax referendum, which reinforced the sagging financial condition of the college, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools granted PSC a five-year accreditation, the longest period of approval the college had ever attained. It's not surprising that after more than a decade of struggle and frustration two salient achievements coming so close together provided the college with a sweet smell of success. These few months did indeed mark the apogee of Prairie State College during its first 25 years. Inflation, however, continued and, combined with other forces, dulled these great expectations in a short time.

Passage of the tax referendum did not insure financial stability by itself but it did provide 11 cents additional tax funding on 100 dollars of equalized assessed evaluation. This was bound to increase the share of local tax support for the college. For more than a decade this portion of local tax support had been declining. Benefits of the tax referendum assured that this trend would be blunted, if not halted. If state aid continued at its present level, the financial picture for the college seemed sanguine indeed.

Elation with success of the tax referendum had not subsided when the North Central Association of Colleges granted the college five-year accreditation in July.[11] This was another remarkable achievement for the institution. Previous approvals were never for more than two years; in one instance accreditation was probational. The accrediting team visited the college in March and recommended at that time "that even though the financial future of the college was uncertain ... the accreditation should be extended for five years."[12] The accreditation would have been granted despite the financial shortcomings, but passage of the referendum made the prospects all the brighter. In two months the college had achieved two milestones never before accomplished, making the summer of 1978 a high point for Prairie State College.

Still, there was more to buoy spirits and heighten morale. Widespread involvement of the community in passing the referendum revived and invigorated the Prairie State College Foundation. Established in 1973, the foundation had achieved limited success because of neglect brought about by the need to deal with many pressing problems confronting the college.[13]

The Citizens Audit Committee, which was created to bring about community involvement and understanding with the problems of the college and especially the need for a tax referendum, provided a reservoir of community leaders who became aware of the college and its needs. Revival was hardly dramatic but steady. From seven active directors in 1979 the number increased to 62 persons in the spring of 1980.[14] More impressive than the increase in participation was the gain in substantive help to the college. With increased college support under the director of community relations, the foundation moved steadily forward revising the organization's by-laws and establishing a year-long calendar for board and executive-committee meetings.[15] During the 1978-79 year the foundation raised $16,305 for scholarships and the construction of two signs identifying the college.[16] Other foundation contributions included a college security vehicle and a series of energy forums.[17] Dormant for several years, the foundation became an active and vital part of the college.

Not the least reason for exhilaration during the summer of 1978 was the sense of community. Both major achievements were the result of cooperative efforts between the college and the community. All parts of the college--trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students--worked hard together to get out the vote and pass the referendum. They also worked diligently to obtain a five-year accreditation. The community at large accepted the college's invitation for help and responded with strong support. All this helped substantially to overcome the college's identity crisis and improve its image. Things were looking up as the fall semester began in 1978.

High hopes and satisfaction were short-lived, however, when certain factors combined to fuel the financial fire. Adding the most fuel to the financial flames was inflation which permeated all facets and levels of the economy and led to economic misery everywhere. During the early 1970s inflation rose at an average rate of 5.3 percent per year, peaking at 10.7 percent in 1974. By 1976 it declined to 4.7 percent, but in the next four years it resumed its rise. In 1979 it was back up to 10.1 percent.[18] At the local level it was especially burdensome in producing rising operational costs for the college. Utility and supply costs soared.

Besides inflation, other factors complicated the financial picture at the local level. Funding relief from the tax referendum was delayed until 1980 because taxes were collected a year late.[19] Furthermore, under terms of the referendum the tax-rate increase was to be phased in at a rate of three to four cents a year until the maximum would be reached after several years.[20] Meanwhile any increase in local support came from an increase in property assessments. During the early 1970s these assessments were increasingly slightly but by the end of the decade gains from this source were minimal.[21]

Tempered as were the hopes of immediate financial help from the local level, prospects for state support were even more grim. State aid for community colleges began to decline sharply in the late 1970s. For Prairie State College, 1979 state funding provided 45 percent of the college's funding; but by 1982 stated funding declined to 32 percent.[22]

The state legislature was allocating about the same amount of money for community colleges during these years, but enrollments were growing, so more students were being educated with no increase in funds. Exacerbating the problem was a shortage when recommended funding fell short, which was not always made up with supplementary appropriations. Education, however, was not the only state-supported venture with this funding problem. Nor was there any special design to discriminate against community colleges in public-supported education. During the formative years of the Illinois community college system, community colleges were given priority in state financing. In later phases of the Master Plan for Higher Education it was recommended that as the community college system grew, stronger state funding would not be as critical since local support was expected to increase.

The consequence of this confluence of factors bearing down on the college was deficit financing. In the fall of 1978 the cumulative deficit stood at $314,000 and by the end of the year the increased expenditures and the decreased revenues added $376,000 to the deficit, making the total deficit $690,000 by June 1979.[23] Inflation plus reduced state funding was making a mockery of the successful tax referendum.

The problem was as old as the college. But it required attention. First step in meeting the problem was more careful planning for state funding. The initiative for this came largely from the state. In the past budgeting was based on the enrollment expected for the following year but actual claims for state reimbursement submitted at the mid-semester always varied from these estimates, and sometimes the difference was significant. Late in the '70s the ICCB determined that funding ought to be based on the actual enrollment of the preceding year, a figure already fixed. Thus reimbursement figures were firm and confusion eliminated.[24]

The college extended its own planning to a period of five years. This extension aimed to assess the financial resources expected to be available over this period. Various operations of the institution were assessed and various alternatives developed to allow the college to live within its means while still providing maximum benefit to the community.[25] To implement this planning a Financial Stabilization Committee formed consisting of administration, faculty and staff. At the conclusion of its first year this committee submitted five recommendations and reviewed many other items to improve the financial condition of the college.[26]

To insure adequate cash flow for operating, the college created a working cash fund of $750,000 as a source of borrowed money while phasing in the 11 cents tax-rate increase.[27] Other measures were required. Expenditures needed reductions and more income was necessary.

Harsh cuts in various places reduced expenditures. Faculty and staff positions were eliminated. Departmental budgets were cut drastically. The largest non-personnel reductions involved the Communications Division, where cuts reduced advertising and printing funds for college promotion. All funds for new and replacement equipment were removed while expansion in growth programs was curtailed and building maintenance deferred.[28] These draconian measures evoked the term "cannibalism" to describe their severity.[a] Purchasing cooperatives was another method employed to cut costs. In 1981 the college participated in three purchasing cooperatives and joined a consortium to reduce insurance payments.[29]

During the early 1970s an increase in the assessed evaluation raised some revenue but this leveled off toward the end of the decade. There remained, however, tuition charges. Raising tuition was never an easy choice because it worked against the fundamental premise of a community college that is, to provide quality education at lower cost. However, once tuition hikes began in the late '60s it seemed easier to tap this resource each succeeding time. With the fall 1980 semester tuition was boosted to $19.50 per hour for in-district students. Out-of-district and out-of-state tuition, however, remained at $49 and $77 per hour, respectively.[30] In less than a year in-district tuition was raised again, this time to $23 per hour.[31]

Though they may have been cannibalistic and draconian, these measures produced results. In 1979-1980 for the first time in four years the college was able to plan for and operate a balanced budget. Furthermore, this funding efficiency continued for the next two years so that by 1981-1982 the college was able to pass a balanced budget and reduce the operating budget cumulative deficit of $124,000.[32] In the late spring of 1982 it appeared that the operating deficit would be erased completely with a small reserve remaining.[33]

Minding the Store, 1978-82

Besides obtaining finances which are essential to the survival of any institution, there are other day-to-day problems which confront a college. These include providing for the needs of a changing student population and maintaining physical facilities at a comfortable and satisfactory level. Then there are other matters which demand attention and take energy away from the essential task of providing education. In the case of Prairie State College these included litigation; the college had to defend itself in ongoing and incidental court cases as the decade of the 1970s drew to a close.

As the college completed its first 25 years the profile of its student body continued the shift which began a decade earlier. Students were getting older with the average age more than 28 years, the median more than 25 years and more than half of them between 20 and 39 years of age.[34] Women, a small minority in the early years of the college, now comprised 54 percent of the students. Many headed single-parent households, and they were seeking education in order to reenter the job market as a response to family economic conditions.[35]

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[a] The term belongs to President R. C. Creal: "When you're in a retrenchment period," he said, "you have to cut back on your expenditures. When your revenues are reduced then everybody begins to look around as to where you can cut; and it's always natural to look at somebody else's area as the place that can be cut. We just keep talking about how we can chew up this area, chew up that area, and do away with this, do away with that, cut back here, cut back there, and it is almost institutional cannibalism. We're just eating ourselves up and we can't do that and survive as the kind of institution that we have been in the past." OHTI, R. C. Creal.

Minority students were increasing. In 1970, 11 percent of the students were minorities, but by 1980 this figure increased to 20 percent. Blacks increased from 12 percent to 15 percent; Hispanics from 2.6 percent to 4 percent; and Asians from less than 1 percent to 1 percent.[36] Native Americans comprised less than 1 percent of the student population.

The student body continued to be the most comprehensive in the state of Illinois, with a cross-section of socioeconomic groups. The percentage of students attending from the various communities within the district was in direct proportion to the population percentage of the district and consistent with national trends while the veterans' population was declining.[37]

Two other trends which began early in the 1970s continued. These were the increasing number of part-time students which reached 70 percent of the total enrollment late in the decade and the increasing size of the night school which exceeded the day enrollment.[38] Thus the college continued to be more of a part-time and night college in the late 1970s.

The increasing enrollment of women produced another wholesome trend. This was the sexual integration of courses which traditionally were women or men-dominated. In the Nursing and Child Development programs men were enrolling, while in Architectural Drafting, Aviation Pilot Training, Electronics, Fire Science, Mechanical Technology and Automotive Services Programs women were enrolling.[39]

This changing student profile, however, was not without problems and required constant assessment if the college was to meet its obligation to provide educational services.

Several factors created a retention problem. The turnover rate of students enrolled each semester was nearly half, meaning that about half of the students enrolling in the fall semester registered for the next spring semester.[40] Contributing to this low rate of retention was the fact that less than one third of the students came directly from high school. In most cases students were holding full-time jobs during the day, taking one course at night, and did not re-enroll after completing the course.

There were, however, other more serious implications. Most compelling was the low academic achievement of many students. Of the students coming directly to the college from high school, the composite ACT score was 16.2 compared to the national average of 18.9, and while in high school they were enrolled in a college preparatory program.[41] For those enrolled in vocational programs at the college the implications were equally bleak. Reading level for students in these programs was "between the ninth and 14th grades" and only 26 percent were reading above the 12th grade level.[42]

These findings called for serious consideration and action. The president sought support of the Faculty Senate and an all-college committee consisting of members from the administration, faculty and supportive staff was created to deal with the problem. Purpose of the committee was "to direct, oversee, coordinate and motivate the work of several sub-committees charged with the task of investigating and recommending remedies to various problems concerning and related to student recruitment, enrollment and retention."[43] Main consequence of this committee which went to work early in 1979, was adoption of the division of Developmental Education in June 1981, following a heated confrontation between trustees and administration on the one hand and the faculty on the other.

In addition to providing educational services for student, other matters required attention in the day-to-day operations of the college in the late 1970s. Not the least of these was maintenance of the physical facilities which consisted of 10 temporary structures and two permanent buildings on the north campus (former interim campus), and the main campus building and technology building addition on the south campus.

With maintenance the main issue was the same as that for the entire college; that is, economics or rising costs in the face of limited resources. "Trying to keep the buildings in good repair," according to the director of physical facilities, "to make them a pleasant place for students and staff to be in, considering the financial problems ... becomes more difficult as the days go on."[44] Especially critical was the rising costs of utilities, particularly electricity. During the first six years in the Main campus building costs for electricity alone rose 150 percent, from $200,000 to $500,000.[45] Efforts at retrofitting many windows on the first floor and moving to a four-day week during the summer months attempted to meet the problem, but these efforts hardly overcame soaring utility costs.[46] Unexpected problems like the need to replace 40 percent of the original water-piping in the main building during the first six years of occupation added to maintenance costs.[47]

Then there was deterioration of the interim campus buildings. This, however, was not unexpected. These buildings were constructed in the late 1960s with a life-expectancy of 10 to 15 years at best. They served the original purpose to provide a temporary campus. Nevertheless they continued to deteriorate. Six of these buildings were removed, and removal of the four remaining temporary structures seemed imminent as the 1980s arrived.[48]

Constant as the task of maintenance is, the winter months are even more difficult. Heavy snowfalls create an urgent problem of snow removal. Complicating conditions is the lack of clear time to deal with the elements with the college in operation 14 hours a day. The winter of 1979 was especially difficult when heavy snowfall caused severe damage to the Dental Building roof. Further complicating matters was the lack of storage space for heavy equipment, causing machinery to be left in the open during sub-zero temperatures.[49] This problem, however, was alleviated when a maintenance-storage garage consisting of 11,000 square feet was added to Building K. Work began in July 1980 and was completed in February 1981.[50]

Related to maintaining physical facilities is the task of keeping them secure and safe for all persons and property while retaining the openness which an educational institution requires. With occupation of the main building this task became greater; a security staff consisting of a supervisor of campus security services and several assistants was given this responsibility. Operating from an office in the main building, two-way radio (walkie-talkie) communications provided quick response to emergencies on a 24-hour basis. Despite these measures vandalism occasionally took place, but damages were minimal.[51] Local police departments evaluated the college's security system "as good as or better than other public institutions in this community and other communities."[52]

Other less urgent but time consuming matters occupied management of the college at the turn of the decade. These included long-standing and incidental court cases. This was not new for the college because during most of the time since it became a separate institution, it had been involved in court proceedings. Sometimes there were several suits in litigation simultaneously; a few continued for years.

The one of longest duration was that involving the termination of Richard W. Hostrop as president. Following his dismissal in July 1970, Hostrop filed a civil rights suit against the college in January 1971 with claims totaling approximately $5 million. In December 1979 the case reached resolution when the plaintiff accepted a nominal payment and a suspension of judgment.[53] Though the case had not been of grave concern, it required the attention of college legal counsel for more than seven years and 11 months. And it was expensive. The college's legal fees totaled six figures albeit the institution did not have to pay court costs which were borne by the plaintiff.[54] At long last after nearly a decade a sensitive incident was closed.

Relief from litigation, however, was short-lived because within eight months the college became involved as defendant in another civil rights case involving the chairman of the Art department. For some time, in addition to an exhibition room near the art studios on the fourth floor of the main building, the Art department utilized a larger room near the main entrance of the main building for exhibits. As part of an exhibit in the large room near the main entrance the art director placed on exhibit three stained-glass windows of his own creation, each 20 by 28 inches in size. The windows evoked many complaints. Besides vocal protests the administration received petitions with between 20 and 40 signatures complaining that the windows were obscene and offensive to women and blacks.[55]

In view of the nature of the subject matter in the windows, the prominent location of the exhibit near the entrance to the main building and the large number of protests, the administration requested that the artist, who was also a coordinator of the exhibit, move the windows to the other gallery on the fourth floor. The artist held that removal of the windows would depend upon agreement of the Art department after a formal meeting. Not waiting for the Art department to meet, the administration removed the windows, returning them to the artist.[56]

Seven months after the windows were removed the art instructor filed suit against the college, with the American Civil Liberties Union taking the case on his behalf, charging the college with censorship that denied him freedom of expression and breaking a 20-year tradition of allowing the Art department to select its own works for exhibit.[57] The case came to trial 21 months later in July 1982. The case was argued in a bench trial for several days. Eighteen months later in January 1984 the court ruled that "a reasonable administrative restraint placed upon the artist's performance did not violate his First Amendment right to freedom of speech." The court supported the college "on all issues" and ordered the artist to pay costs and attorney fees incurred by the college. Not satisfied with the decision the plaintiff appealed to the United States Supreme Court which rejected the appeal thus upholding the original ruling in favor of the college.[58]

Again the college was supported in the courts; but for several months the issue remained in doubt. During this time the college went forth with no evidence that its main function of education suffered to any degree. Nevertheless, litigation is a distraction and for more than five years, time and effort were taken away from the main task at hand.

Besides support for the college the case served as a reminder of the community college paradox that is, the distinct and unusual position of community colleges which are neither four-year colleges nor secondary schools. In arriving at his decision the judge stated that the case would turn on two issues, one of which was "the relationship of a special type of institution [that is] not in the category of four-year universities.[59] As the paradox continued Prairie State College was continuing its part in the evolution.

As the decade of the 1970s moved into the 1980s the day-to-day operations of the college required dealing with many different problems some of which were expected and others that were not.

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

THE COLLEGE REACHES A MILESTONE

With commencement a college celebrates the high point of its academic year, but on 15 May 1982 commencement held a special meaning for Prairie State College because it marked completion of a quarter-century of educational service to a growing community. The ambience was festive and the future seemed bright. However, this outward festive atmosphere masked inward tension that had been building for several years. A month before commencement, faculty salaries were frozen for the remainder of the year. Fear of another strike permeated the campus. On 20 May the hiring freeze was amended to allow exception for hiring replacement staff in the event of a strike and on 21 May the strike came. It lasted 79 days, the longest teachers' strike ever in the Illinois community college system. On this dismal note Prairie State College concluded its 25th year.

Continuing Contention

After all parts of the college had cooperated to the fullest extent in passing a tax referendum, contention once more became the internal method of operation between the trustees and administration on the one hand and the faculty on the other as the decade of the 1970s turned into the 1980s. This strife moved through a faculty strike, unsavory incidents and a bitter disagreement over policy governing the institution.

As the spring 1979 semester moved toward conclusion relations between the trustees/administration and the faculty resumed a familiar pattern. Several weeks before contract expiration the union made clear its desires to begin negotiations. Trustees, on the other hand, were more reluctant to begin negotiations so early. Salary increases were almost always first on the list of union proposals. Because the amount of funds available for salaries depended largely on the amount of state funds forthcoming which were not prescribed until the General Assembly closed at the end of June or early July, the trustees were hardly prepared to enter negotiations at such an early date. Thus negotiations seldom began until the end of the semester and before the opening of summer school. Consequently attitudes on both sides during the last few weeks of the semester tended to become glum and even surly. Historically, a strike, which almost always occurred (only one of the first six contracts was renewed without a strike), would last an average of 3.6 days after which an agreement would be reached and operations would resume.

It therefore came as no surprise that without a union contract a strike closed the opening of summer school on 12 June 1979. After a week of the strike, negotiations began with a federal mediator meeting with the negotiators from both sides. A lawyer represented the trustees/administration as chief negotiator, a practice which had been established for several years; and several administrators served as resource people. Representing the faculty, however, was a new chief negotiator who was a member of the college's teachers' union.

As negotiations began there were two main issues. As always there was the economic problem of salary raises. Then there was the question of the rewriting of some sections of the policy manual or governance document for the college. As negotiations continued a third issue developed. This was a no strike clause.[1]

For the trustees the issue of salaries depended to a large extent on the amount of state funding the college received. This amount was never known until the General Assembly appropriated education funds before adjourning the last day of June. Then if state revenue was sufficient to meet these appropriations the funds originally appropriated would be available. If, however, revenue was insufficient, special appropriations would be necessary and these were not always made. Precise amounts of funding, therefore, depended on many uncertain factors. Trustees, however, were prepared to negotiate salaries providing funds were available.

Of much more concern to the trustees, however, was the matter of policy and their authority to establish policy. Essentially all of the policy manual had been included in previous contracts. The trustees desired that a few parts of the policy manual pertaining to faculty accountability be reworded and thus reopened for negotiation. These related to sick days, faculty evaluation and tenure.

The trustees held that keeping the policy manual intact in effect forced the trustees to surrender their role as policy makers, which was essentially their main responsibility. On the issue of a strike the trustees sought an agreement with the union not to strike for the duration of the contract, holding that this would bring stability to trustee and faculty relations at a time when funding seemed to be developing into a greater problem for the next few years.[2]

Understandably, the union took a different point of view on these issues. As far as policy was concerned this was hardly negotiable because the policy manual had been included in an early contract and to open it for negotiation would be to run the risk of surrendering an agreement already reached. The faculty was satisfied with the status of the policy manual and saw no reason for a change.[3] Wages were another matter. With the Consumer Price Index rising rapidly for several years and showing a 13.9 percent jump in 1978, the union asked for a 15 percent raise in salaries to meet this inflationary surge.[4] A no-strike policy was not acceptable since a strike is the union's ultimate weapon without which there is little force.

The opening of negotiations on 19 June resulted in two weeks of turmoil affecting all parts of the institution. Already delayed a week there was serious doubt whether there would be any summer school. After several negotiating meetings a tentative agreement was reached at the end of an all-night session on 26 June. This announcement brought signs of relief from all sides that summer school classes might begin within hours if not the next day. Before this could happen, however, union members needed to ratify the agreement. In less than three hours union membership rejected the tentative agreement. Insufficient salary raises and language involving faculty availability on campus and office hours were given as reasons for rejections.[5] The union advised that unless there was more money for salaries it did not wish to resume negotiations.[6] Frustrated that the tentative agreement which he had supported had been rejected, the union's chief negotiator resigned, thus compounding the problem, especially for the union.

The trustees were also frustrated. The two-week delay in summer school and a drop of 9.4 percent in credit hours from the original registration caused a significant loss in revenue. Trustees took action through a resolution at their regular meeting two days later. This resolution called for starting summer school on 2 July and closing 22 August. "If the faculty members who have agreed to teach classes and fulfill other assignments are in their assigned classrooms," the resolution stated, "and fulfilling their responsibilities the first day of their schedule that class shall be held and continue as long as the faculty members are fulfilling his or her assignments. Any summer school course," the resolution continued, "which is not staffed with the assigned faculty member on the first scheduled day of the course shall be irrevocably canceled upon confirmation of the faculty member's absence. Any course which is staffed by a faculty member who refuses to fulfill his or her assigned duties and responsibilities shall be irrevocably canceled."[7]

This was a grim statement and its implications did not go unnoticed among union members. Clearly, the trustees intended to hold summer school if any teachers were willing to conduct classes. The trustees' resolve brought pressure on the union.

With another chief negotiator representing the union, negotiations resumed in two days, and another all-night session produced a second tentative agreement early on 2 July. The union membership tentatively accepted the agreement a few minutes later and summer school began later that day.[8]

Weeks into the summer session union members detected flaws in the tentative agreement. First of these was the lack of additional salary steps at the top of the schedule. A second point was a no-strike agreement after salaries were reopened the second year. A third objection related to language involving the policy manual. Two days before the end of summer school the union threatened to strike again if these changes were not made in the proposed contract.[9]

As the opening of the fall semester drew near prospects for a strike were foreboding. But when classes began 27 August there were no picket lines. Absence of a strike, however, did not remove tension. The faculty was teaching without a contract, an unusual condition for a union. Tension persisted and early in October the union rejected the tentative agreement reached in July by a vote of 55 to 8 urging the trustees to resume negotiations.[10]

Frustrations mounted especially among the faculty when more than two weeks passed without a response from the trustees. With two tentative agreements apparently abrogated it is not surprising that the board was confused and hardly prepared for a quick response. "It is indeed sad," stated one teacher, "to see the deterioration continue between our own faculty and administration. For our institution to continue to be a leader in education," he went on, "it is imperative that collectively we recreate that harmonious atmosphere that I recall helped convince me to join the Prairie State College team well over five years ago."[11] Board members also expressed a "sincere desire for an early settlement."[12]

On 5 November negotiations resumed in the first formal meeting between the two factions in nearly four months. Another all-night session produced a third agreement in the hours just before dawn. This accord provided for 7 percent salary increases for two years with salary reopening at the end of two years and removal of the no-strike clause for the third year; two additional salary steps were added at the top of the 16-step schedule; language references to policy changes were clarified; and the college assumed payment of tax-sheltered contributions to the teacher retirement funds.[13] Three weeks later on 27 November the union ratified this contract by a vote of 34 to 28 thus ending the most harrowing and longest (to date) of teacher negotiations at Prairie State College which had continued for more than four months.

In retrospect there were no winners in the 1979 strike. In terms of funding the college lost a substantial amount of tuition after the drop in original enrollment during the two weeks in which classes were not held. But the students, as usual, were the greatest losers in terms of inconvenience. Some who withdrew transferred to other community colleges and completed their summer work on schedule. Foremost, however, their summer schedules were upset and they barely completed their work in time to begin the fall semester. Though the union seemed to achieve most of its objectives in the final contract these aims were accomplished only at the price of lengthy negotiations which produced strain, tension and frustration within the union itself. Inexperience in the union negotiating leadership, as much as any other factor, compounded and exacerbated the lengthy negotiations. The trustees hardly realized any triumph. They failed in their effort to get the policy manual reworded in some places; thus their authority to establish policy remained limited and constrained. If there ever was a bunch of losers they could be found in the aftermath of the 1979 strike at Prairie State College.

An accurate description of the strike came from a senior faculty member. "All of the strikes," he said, "were difficult. They all caused mental anguish and uncertainty. I suppose the last one [to date] in 1979 was the worst because it was the longest.... The settlement was almost predictable. Nothing new came out of negotiations. Neither side gained. Frequently all parties assumed adversary roles. Unfortunately the students were caught in the middle. The strike of 1979 was probably the most useless for both sides."[14]

In previous strikes the weeks and months following the end of a contract agreement always brought a return to work with relief and a tendency to forget most of the acrimony which strikes frequently foment. Stresses, strains and bitterness following strikes, however, are hardly ever completely dispelled, and these sentiments languished and lingered longer following the strike of 1979. They also evoked several tawdry episodes.

First of these deviate occurrences developed within weeks after contract acceptance in the form of an underground newsletter dealing with college events. For some time the Office of Communications had been printing a newsletter entitled, "This Week at Prairie State College," which reported college events and personnel news notes. Within weeks after the contract agreement there appeared another newsletter with the same title but without a statement of the editorial office or authorship.

Contrast between the two newsletters was appalling. Where the Office of Communications was positive, emphasizing accomplishments of the college and personnel, the underground publication consisted for the most part of personal attacks on the trustees and administration which bordered on libel. Each subsequent issue evoked consternation and concern. Trustees, administration and faculty shared the feeling "that the newsletter was in poor taste, insulting, petty and cheap."[15] Origin of the publication remained a secret. The faculty union disavowed any connection with the publication. Consensus held that it originated with a disgruntled faculty member.

Distracting as the underground newsletter was to all segments of the college, the problem became compounded when the publication was circulated in the community and to the Illinois Community College Board.[16] This step, which produced nothing but a negative image of the college throughout the state, not unexpectedly evoked an admonishment from the president. "The continued attempt," he wrote, "to discredit members of the administration and the Board of Trustees through the printing of misinformation, innuendoes, half-truths and actions out of context does disservice to the total college." He continued, "By deliberately distributing the bulletin to members of the press, elected officials, the Illinois Community College Board and other agencies while using the name of the official news publication of the college, the union leadership apparently believes that there is some gain to be made by publicly attacking the credibility of administrators and the board."[17]

His statement had little effect on the underground newsletter which continued publication. Recipients of the newsletter in the community objected strenuously to receiving "this kind of garbage."[18] Another stated that he had "been in politics for many years and I've never seen such vicious attacks on people."[19] Attempts of the college to halt distribution into the community brought accusations of censorship. In an attempt to halt mailing of the underground newsletter from the college mailroom on college postage, the college established that all outgoing mail be unsealed.[20] To halt distribution into the community the college restricted use of college duplication machines for teachers' union material, some of which was not related to the newsletter. This provoked a union grievance charge.[21]

When publication of the newsletter continued several months into 1981 the president wrote another open letter to one of the union leaders. "In fact the 'News'," he wrote, "serves as a demoralizing factor within the institution, and, by distributing it to elected public officials all across the state, it reduces support for the college externally."[22] Not long thereafter the newsletter ceased publication, and with settlement of the grievance on the use of duplication materials and mail service with the union, the underground newsletter incident closed.

While the underground newsletter was invoking anguish within the college, another incident added further distress to internal relations. This occurred during a staff development meeting. These meetings were held once each semester when classes were suspended. The entire college staff met in general and small group sessions at which attendance was expected.

Noticing the departure of the vice president of instruction from the meeting, the faculty member who headed the union negotiating team confronted the vice president and, using obscene language, questioned his departure. Startled at the tone of questioning and perhaps over-reacting, the vice president, who was less than three months into his new appointment, ordered the instructor suspended at once without pay for 10 days.[23]

In view of all the tensions prevailing at the time, reaction of the faculty was predictable. Within a few days, 74 faculty members signed a petition protesting the suspension. "We the faculty of Prairie State College," the statement read, "protest the unfair and uncalled-for suspension of one of our colleagues. . . This suspension is the last and most serious of a series of ill-considered and irresponsible actions taken by the vice president of instruction [these were not detailed] . . .This action was incorrect and has no basis in law, the college policies, or the union-board agreement. The faculty member's right to due process has been denied; in fact, he is even denied a hearing in this matter before termination of the suspension." The protest continued to state that "such action against a faculty member demonstrates poor judgment and blatant and dangerous misuse of power."[24]

Buoyed by this demonstration of support from his faculty colleagues, the suspended teacher took the college to court charging that he had not been given a hearing and consequently his constitutional rights were denied. Once more the college found itself back in the courts. A year later the court ruled in favor of the defendant holding that the teacher's "constitutional rights had been denied because no hearing had been granted," found "the suspension to be improper and invalid as a matter of law," and, "ordered the college to pay the teacher his back salary for 10 days and to purge his personnel file of all references to the suspension."[25] The court decision, however, did not exonerate the faculty member's original, crude affront which did nothing toward assuaging strained relations within the college.

Frustration was not confined to faculty. The trustees had their share and more than they desired. After all it had taken three tentative agreements before the last faculty-union contract was ratified only to be followed with a continual struggle to terminate an underground newsletter that was stirring dissension within the college and tarnishing the image in the community. In the midst of all this the court had indicated that the college had used a heavy hand in dealing with crass insubordination by a teacher. Most of all, the last contract did not provide for policy revisions that the trustees felt restricted their right to establish policy. Quite understandably, the trustees also had cause to feel frustrated. At this low point, relief appeared and from an unexpected source, the General Assembly.

How the trustees regained much of their prerogative in setting policy provides a study in paradox. It began in the late 1970s with the growing sentiment throughout the state for teacher accountability. This aspect involves evaluation which is required in most educational systems when a teacher is given tenure. Senate Bill 147, introduced in the 81st General Assembly, provided for a tenure provision to be incorporated into the Public Community College Act. This bill, which spelled out tenure provisions, evaluation and dismissal policies, was passed on 23 June 1979 while Prairie State College was involved in its extended negotiations connected with the strike of that year.[26]

The bill immediately evoked opposition, especially from many community college trustees, including Prairie State College for awhile, on grounds that policy was the prerogative of local community college boards and not the state legislature. Supporting this view, the governor vetoed the bill on 14 September; but the General Assembly overrode the veto on 1 November and the bill became effective 1 January 1980 as Public Community College Teacher Tenure Act incorporated into the Public Community College Act.[27]

For the trustees, enactment of this law was a blessing in disguise because it provided a legal loophole for modifying the policy manual which the board had strived unsuccessfully to alter for nearly a decade. Enactment of this law meant that tenure for Illinois community college faculty members was to be established by statutory provisions rather than by the respective community college boards. Furthermore, existing community college tenure policies needed to be examined and, if necessary, brought into line with requirements of the Tenure Act.[28] This was precisely the opening the Prairie State College trustees were looking for and they seized it to revise the policy manual.

Actually there was not much variance between provisions of the law and those of the college. Length of time to obtain tenure was three years in both cases. The key variation, however, was in evaluation before placing a teacher on tenure which was precisely the area the trustees had been striving to modify for nearly a decade. Dismissal policy was another tenuous area. Therefore, revisions were required and made to bring Prairie State College policy into agreement with the Tenure Act.[29] Thus, the public Community College Teacher Tenure Act, which the Prairie State College trustees along with trustees from other Illinois community colleges opposed because it took authority from them and placed it with state statues, became the instrument whereby the trustees found relief in the contentious struggle with the Faculty Union to regain control over some aspects of policy making.[a]

Faculty response was again predictable. After all, initiative in making policy, especially policy relating to evaluation which the union had successfully kept out of the contract for a decade, was now back in the hands of the trustees. From the union's point of view this was exasperating. Reaction was loud and long-lasting for more than eight months extending from the time the policy revisions were presented and finally adopted.

The original draft of the policy revisions was introduced at the 20 November 1980 trustees meeting. This revised rendition represented a change in format from the previous version and consisted of two documents. One consisted of policies and the other consisted of procedures. The board offered five reasons for the proposed revision. These were "to divide the policies from procedures, to restructure policies into a more usable form and language, clarify policies language, accommodate new state law/court cases, and to commit to writing and/or bring together into one cohesive document separate from the Board Policies Manual the procedures which have been established for operating at Prairie State College."[30] In presenting the revision the board outlined the procedure for adoption. The trustees invited all interested parties of the college to review the proposed revision and, if desired, to recommend changes. Full consideration would be given to all recommendations before final adoption within two or three months.[31]

Faculty opposition to the policy revision came forth even before the instrument was introduced. Obviously having seen the document in advance, one faculty member expressed the view that the proposed policies and procedures manual "is a significant change from the previous policies adopted in 1975 (agreed to as part of the Union-Board agreement) and emasculates the role of the faculty member in the college."[32] He further expressed a desire for faculty input into the document. Another faculty member advised the board that "hopes were running high that a spirit of cooperation and trust was developing at the college. However, without some major revisions to the proposed policies document, that hope will be damaged."[33] Indeed faculty opposition was prompt and clear at the outset.

At the next board meeting the faculty presented a petition bearing signatures of 77 faculty members who viewed the "development of the policies without initial faculty input as a negative step toward faculty-administration cooperation."[34] In a lengthy interchange which followed presentation of the petition both faculty and trustees presented their views. The trustees denied that the policy revision was "a complete redoing in respect to intent" of the first document and urged faculty members to suggest comments to the board so recommendations could be considered before final adoption.[35]

Faculty opposition to the policy revision continued for several months without diminution albeit there was less opposition expressed directly at board meetings. On 23 July 1981 the revised form of policy was adopted essentially as originally introduced.[36]

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[a] Opposition to the tenure law was indeed strong on the part of respective community college trustees. John Wood Community College in Quincy challenged the law in court. This only brought mixed feelings for the Prairie State College trustees who could empathize with the Quincy board but hoped that their case would fail, which it did.

What the trustees failed to accomplish in negotiations they were able to achieve another way. If the board's frustration was less through this stroke, the faculty's was more. In any case, frustration and tension still permeated intra-institutional relations as Prairie State College began its 25th year. Before this year's end disappointment and discord would grow greater.

Ending the First Quarter-Century in Discord

As the last several months of the first 25 years drew to a close the college presented a strange harmony of contrasts. Outwardly there was an image of a stable institution, but inwardly there lingered problems of economics and strained human relations which continued to require constant concern and attention. Dealing with these internal problems strained the institution to the utmost leaving it depressed as the second 25 years began.

A visitor to the Prairie State College campus early in 1982 could very easily gain the impression of a stable institution and justifiably so. Physically the campus consisted of three large brick buildings. There was no construction underway, the last having consisted of an addition to the maintenance building, the original permanent campus structure. This had been completed and occupied for more than a year.

A cursory examination of enrollment and faculty numbers would support the impression of stability. Enrollment during the past five years had grown slightly to more than 6,000 students (total headcount), representing a gain of more than 2 percent since 1975. Full-time faculty numbered more than 100 and part-time instructors totaled more than 250. The faculty itself gave an impression of stability. Additional full-time appointments were declining each year, and the instructional staff was maturing in terms of chronological age and experience. Retirement which began with the first retirees in 1973 had become a common event each year and the close of the spring 1982 semester would count four more senior faculty retirees.

In the day-to-day operations of the college, however, conditions were hardly stable. Stress and strain continued to dominate in two areas: human relations, especially cooperation between the trustees/administration and faculty; and the constant problem of financing the college's operation.

Despite the trustees' adoption of a policy revision late in the summer of 1981, this action continued to be a contentious issue as the calendar year 1982 began. In an attempt to prevent the college from enforcing the adoption of policy changes the union lodged litigation early in 1982.[37]

Meanwhile, the problem of financing persisted, and early in 1982 it was becoming more acute. The vice president for finance and business services alerted the trustees to this specter in March 1982. In his report he projected figures which showed deficits growing from $270,300 for Fiscal 1983 to $1,517,800 for Fiscal 1985 which would create a cumulative deficit of $3,398,000 after three years.[38]

There was really nothing new about the problem. The reasons for concern were unchanged. Costs were rising largely due to inflation and sources of revenue were declining. Prairie State seemed especially vulnerable because preliminary indications were that the college would receive nearly $400,000 less in state aid during the following year than during the present year, representing the second-largest proportionate cut of any community college in Illinois. Furthermore, the college no longer qualified for the equalization grant of nearly a quarter of a million dollars. The college was in the unenviable position of being too rich to qualify for an equalization grant and too poor to manage without it.[39]

Confronting these stark figures, the trustees placed a 60-day moratorium on hiring of all new full-time personnel until the college had a clearer picture of funding. At the subsequent meeting the board went a step further and moved to freeze all salaries for six months. These steps, the board chairman reasoned, "were necessary to protect job security, maintain quality programs, maximize opportunities for students and to preserve budget integrity.[40]

There was, however, an exception to these restrictions relating to six administrators. For several years hiring practices were to appoint administrators for two years. Six administrators were completing their first year. Thus the president recommended and the board moved to renew these contracts for another year. "While this action," the president stated, "will have a negative effect on morale, it is necessary at this time.[41]

As expected there was opposition to the board's action from at least two places. A trustee raised an objection to extending the contracts of "administrators when we haven't for staff." She also raised the question of accountability, always a tender issue. "The time has come for accountability," she said.[42] To the surprise of nobody, opposition came from a second place, the Faculty Union, but the reasoning was interesting. Indeed the union considered freezing salaries a violation of the contract but more important it was the way it was handled that hurt more. In an open letter the union representative stated that "the union was not objecting to the action per se--in fact, it might have been supported--but to the procedure under which it was instituted." He stated further, "you never know, we might have been right along with you. But it's a case of the way it was gone about . . . ideally the dialogue and discussion are to take place before a decision." He charged that "the board had made a unilateral decision, without allowing input."[43] Again the main objection was that the faculty had not been brought into the decision-making process. It was a familiar faculty protest.

These decisions to declare a moratorium on hiring and to freeze salaries did not come easy for the trustees. Counsel advised that this action was entirely within the board's discretion but for at least one member it was his most difficult decision as a trustees. "The last thing I wanted to do," he stated, "was to enter into discussion that would lead people to believe there was money for wage increases when we knew there wasn't."[44] Financial difficulty, however, was not peculiar to Prairie State College in the spring of 1982. It was a common ailment in higher education. At this time, Northwestern University confronting an unbalanced budget for four years, announced that it was also freezing salaries.[45]

Four attempts by the trustees to gain the Faculty Union's support of a six-month wage freeze were unsuccessful. Then the board addressed an open letter to the entire faculty at a general faculty meeting pleading its case. "This year's salary freeze action," the report stated, "is being taken only because this year's circumstances demand it. In fact, the board's action is exactly the action recommended by the IBHE for all public colleges and universities throughout the state."[46] The board urged the faculty to consider its recent record. "Over the past three years, for example," the report read, "the average faculty salary increased...35.8 percent. When money has been available salary increases have been provided."[47] The union took a contradictory view holding that there would be a surplus of $250,000.[48]

Faced with several faculty retirements at the end of the spring semester, the trustees amended the moratorium on hiring new staff. One appointment was made to fill vacancies created by the retirement of two full-time history instructors. Other vacancies were filled.[49] By lifting the moratorium, staffing for the coming year remained near the same level.

On 21 May, to hardly anybody's surprise, the strike came. A two-week "mini-session" was scheduled to begin that day and conclude prior to the opening of the regular summer session. It was a cold morning with drizzle falling. A dozen striking faculty distributed information sheets to the few students who appeared for classes. Nine classes scheduled to begin were not staffed, and the seventh strike in 13 years was underway.[50] This would be the longest community college strike in the nation's history, thus gaining dubious national attention for the college.[51] For Prairie State College itself it would be the most acrimonious and demoralizing of any previous work stoppage.

At the outset the main issue was faculty salary increases. The faculty asked for a 5 percent increase, arguing that funds were available to meet this request.[52] The board sought a six-month extension of the most recent contract arguing that the strike already threatened to reduce summer session revenue which in turn would generate greater financial losses under the state funding formula which appropriated funds on a two-year delayed basis. Thus a low summer session enrollment would mean fewer hours to be funded for fiscal 1984.

Another issue was the inclusion of a written due process procedure in the contract. This stemmed from a case in which a faculty member sued and won against the college on grounds that his civil rights were denied in insubordination charges against him. Another issue was the contentious policy principle which the union opposed vehemently on grounds that the policy was adopted without faculty approval.[53]

When the first negotiating session broke down on 2 June and it became evident to the trustees that a strike on the regular summer session was imminent, the board took the first of four actions which together demonstrated a more aggressive approach than the trustees had ever taken in any of the previous six strikes. They announced that "if teachers are not present at the beginning of classes, replacements would be hired . . . to teach for the entire session regardless of the outcome of negotiations with the Faculty Union."[54] The response was impressive. More than 200 applications were received from which more than 100 instructors were hired to replace the striking teachers. Furthermore, three full-time union members decided to cross the picket lines to teach, and they were joined by another seven full-time teachers who were not union members.[55] This represented a new development from past strikes in which only two or three full-time teachers, usually non-union faculty, chose to teach. Two weeks into the summer session, according to college spokesmen, more than 90 percent of summer school classes were being taught.[56] This was a radical departure from previous strikes during which very few classes were held, and the college was virtually closed.

Response of the union to the large number of replacements teaching classes was verbal and active. "It seems as though the administration wants to get rid of the union. We don't know," a union member continued, "exactly why they want to break the union."[57] Then for the first time in the many strikes, vandalism incidents took place. A rock was thrown through the window of the office of the president, and there were other incidents. The trustees responded to these acts with another bold stroke in the form of a temporary restraining court order on 9 June. This order prohibited striking teachers from "blocking entrances to the college or preventing people from entering and leaving the school, threatening, harassing and intimidating employees and students and picketing on the college property."[58] The next day, the second negotiating session broke down after four hours when the federal mediator decided the two sides were not close enough on issues to continue talking.[59] On 18 June the temporary restraining order was extended with specific instructions to the union president that any violations against the order would result in a contempt of court charge against him.[60]

With replacements teaching their classes and a court order restraining their picketing, the striking teachers found themselves in a tenuous position. For the next two months they followed a two-pronged approach. First was an effort to discredit the quality of instruction which the replacements were providing. There were statements attempting to place the blame for this low-quality instruction with the president. A union statement said that the group was "more convinced than ever that quality in the instructional program is being sacrificed for the president's inability to work with his professional staff."[61] College spokesmen denied this, emphasizing the quality of replacements. The director of communications issued a statement which held that the replacements included a large number of teachers holding doctorates, 11 of them in the disciplines in which they held their degrees. Replacements also included 38 with master's degrees while the replacements had 464 years of teaching experience and 384 years of professional experience combined.[62]

More disconcerting than these, however, were attempts at intimidation. A letter circulated among replacement teachers stated that "summer substitutes who do not honor the full-time instructors' job action will not be looked upon favorably by the departments for subsequent employment."[63] Subsequently several replacement teachers resigned.

Settlement of the strike still depended on negotiations, and the court urged both sides to negotiate. The union stated that salary and due process were only two of 78 issues set for negotiation and the "union will not sit down to talk unless every issue we have on the list can be discussed."[64] The trustees countered with a list of six demands. Five of these were already known to the union but the sixth demanded "removal of all department chairmen from the union bargaining unit." This interjected another demand which resurrected an old sore and prompted union charges of escalation.[65] "There's a growing feeling among some people," stated the union spokesman, "that they're doing everything they can to bust the union, or to get rid of full-time faculty. It's certainly bad faith."[66]

There were two reasons for the trustee/administration move to remove department chairmen. One was the nature of the position itself which is ambivalent since part of the tasks of a department chairman are administrative when scheduling classes and assigning instructors. Many department chairmen were prominent in the Faculty Union and the board argued that they should be less prominent in negotiations. Another reason was the prospect that in their positions as chairmen they would be in a position to take punitive action against assigning instructors who had accepted summer school appointments. Replacing department chairmen with coordinators would place these positions essentially in staff or administrative hands.[67]

Union objection was not so much to the name of the position but the manner in which the coordinators were to be chosen. "I don't really see the coordinators as much different," said a union leader. "The big difference, of course, is that it is not the members of the department that are selecting them."[68]

Throughout July and into the first week of August a dismal atmosphere permeated the campus. Summer school continued with replacements and several regular full-time faculty teaching. Frustration extended to students. "I sense a feud between the faculty and the administration," stated one. "This kind of relationship cannot help the college. I would like to see more cooperation."[69] A group of students calling themselves the Concerned Students Organization for Negotiations arranged an open meeting for trustee, student and faculty spokesmen. The gathering attracted about 100 interested persons and resulted in a restatement of the "rock-hard positions of . . . college officials and members of the striking teachers."[70]

On 7 July the Cook County Circuit Court reviewed the status of the temporary restraining order. Another judge took the assignment since the original judge relinquished the case because of others he had to handle. The restraining order was not lifted, but the judge agreed to become involved as a mediator if it was agreeable to both sides. College officials, however, rejected the proposal because a federal mediator was already involved, while the case before the judge concerned the temporary restraining order.[71]

When a negotiating session on 12 July broke down after several hours without movement on either side, union frustration heightened. At this point the union recognized that increased support would be useful. During the previous strikes, public sentiment, if not pro-teachers, was at least neutral; but before the 1982 strike was called the local press opposed a strike for the first time. "There is nothing to gain and much to lose with a strike this summer," opined an editorial.[72] Among union circles, however, the need for public sentiment in a strike is a moot question.[b]

Nevertheless, support did come to the Prairie State Teachers' Union from its fellow union members. At its annual convention, the American Federation of Teachers adopted a resolution condemning the actions of the Prairie State College trustees and their alleged refusal to negotiate a contract and further condemned the board for hiring a law firm which had a history of union-breaking.[73]

On 26 July about 50 striking teachers and supporters gathered for a "Solidarity Day" rally. It was brief, lasting about 10 minutes. Robert Healey, president of the Illinois Federation of Teachers who had led the Chicago Teachers' Union through several strikes, addressed the small gathering. "We know what's going on, we admire it and we know you'll come out on top," he stated. "You're facing one of the most difficult situations I've seen in my 12 years."[74] Thus support was forthcoming from other faculty unions, but the small turnout did not auger well for strong and active support from these sources.

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[b] William E. Patton, long-time Prairie State College union leader, stated: "In my opinion public support or lack of support is totally immaterial. I like to look back at the air controllers as a prime example. I don't believe that any union has ever done a better job of gaining public support and bringing to the public the issues and the importance of what it was they were doing. And nothing could have been a greater disaster. The Prairie State College union during its strikes has done many things that appear to be directed toward gaining public support. In my opinion most of what we did was not to gain public support, but to pacify our own members. I don't believe the board has been affected by what the public thought. And I don't believe the union should ever allow itself to be affected by what the public thinks. If they are going in with demands and positions that are so out of touch with reality that's the job of the opposing negotiator. So I discount the idea that the public really has an effect on any strike whether it's ours or anyone else's. I don't believe it makes one bit of difference." OHTI, W. E. Patton, 26 January 1983.

Within the next 10 days the trustees took a fourth hard step. On 29 July the board moved to abolish chairmen positions and authorized public notices seeking qualified instructors for the fall semester.[75] Next, a college spokesman announced that "no decision had been made on the employment of any teachers for the fall semester but a pool of prospective employees would be available if striking teachers refused to teach when classes started."[76] A deadline of 6 August was set for applications. This statement carried a clear message that the trustees were prepared to continue into the fall semester on the same basis as summer school that is, with replacements for all full-time teachers who refused to teach.

On 7 August a negotiating session produced a tentative agreement just in time for teachers to report for work on 16 August, preparatory to the opening of the fall semester classes. On 19 August the Teachers' Union approved the contract by a vote of 40 to 32 and that evening at its regular meeting the trustees approved the contract by a vote of 6 to 0 with one member in absentia. Thus the longest community college strike in history ended after 79 days.[77]

Besides establishing the dubious record of longevity for community college strikes, the 1982 strike was notable for several reasons. In the first place it was a strike that "nobody really wanted." "In my opinion," stated an administrator, "the strike could have been avoided. Nobody wanted it. Nobody (on the faculty) wanted it, I think."[78]

If nobody wanted the strike, the logical question is: Why did it take place? The strike took place because of general frustration throughout the college stemming from lack of mutual trust and respect on the part of trustees, administration and faculty which had been growing worse for at least two years. All segments of the college felt this malaise. Nobody wished to admit it, but the sentiment seemed to gain expression in the phrase, "them and us."

Documentation for this root cause came bluntly and painfully to the college when the Cosand Report was issued two months after the strike was settled.[c] The main problem the report stated was "internal conflicts at Prairie State College," which extended to all segments of the college and within each segment. "Although conflict exists within each of the three units, the more serious conflicts are occurring between the units."[79]

The report left no segment of the college unscathed. There were board shortcomings. "The seven board members are not acting as a cohesive unit," the report stated. "There is open comment about individual board member interactions with faculty members and with the media. This type of action will almost always result in 'split' boards to the detriment of the college."[80] The administration came in for criticism. "The president and the four vice presidents," the report read, "are considered to be reclusive and unapproachable."[81] Nor was the faculty blameless. "The faculty is considered to be militant and defensive," stated the report.[82] This divisiveness extended to the board. "The conflict between the administration and the faculty," the report read, "has involved the board to the extent that individual board members are in support of the administration or of the faculty."[83] Indeed, the report presented a sad commentary on the real state of the college.

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[c] Early in 1982 the trustees appointed Joseph P. Cosand, professor of higher education at the University of Michigan, to study Prairie State College and provide a reorganization structure of the administration, evaluate the counseling and research offices and evaluate the vice-presidential positions to determine if the structure should be altered. Professor Cosand spent several days on the campus interviewing people from all parts of the college. Cosand visited the campus from 29 September through 1 October interviewing 28 people including board members, the president, vice presidents, directors, faculty and students.

Harsh and critical as the Cosand Report was, however, it suggested a solution to the fundamental problem which had the college stymied. "Interpersonal relationships based upon mutual respect, open communication and understanding," stated the report, "are essential and will cause most administrative organizations to function for the good of the college and therefore for the students and the community the college is committed to service."[84] It was a task for all. "The three units of the college . . . together must accept the responsibility for developing and maintaining an educational program of excellence for their constituents--the students and the community. It is essential that the board, administration, and faculty work together to eliminate the present attitudes of suspicion, resentment and disrespect for if such attitudes are not eliminated changes in organization may be of little value."[85] If there was ever any real doubt about the cause of the strike, the college's malaise and what the remedy was, the Cosand Report erased this apprehension.

The 1982 strike was also notable for the aggressive action of the trustees. Unlike previous strikes that beleaguered the college, once the strike was called on summer school, the trustees moved through a series of bold steps that in retrospect would seem to have been designed. The first act was to hire faculty replacements and keep the summer program open to completion albeit at a slightly reduced scale. The college had never taken this bold action before. When vandalism soon erupted for the first time in the many strikes, the college obtained a temporary restraining order which the Prairie State College Teachers' Union had never before confronted. It tempered its action. A third bold step, replacement of department chairmen, did not affect the strike directly, but this stroke strengthened the administrative control. The fourth stroke, an announcement that the college intended to continue its operation in the fall semester with replacements, if necessary, was perhaps the most unkind cut of all.

Coincidentally, or otherwise, the strike was settled within two days after this announcement. Indeed, if the initiative in the first six strikes seemed to rest with the Teachers' Union, during the strike of 1982 the trustees seemed to exercise the initiative.

Finally the strike of 1982 was notable for the negative, if not dismal, consequences which followed. By their nature, strikes are adversarial, and in contests there is the urge to assess the outcome. Again there was no clear winner in the strike of 1982, only a bunch of losers. Perhaps a more apt assessment would be that the trustees were less losers than the faculty if one were keeping score. There were essentially six main issues in the contract settlement.

On three of these issues the trustees gained their objectives. On the point of salaries, raises were postponed until January 1983, essentially a six-month freeze, which was what the trustees requested from the outset. After a 3 percent raise during the first eight months of the year, salaries were increased to 5 percent with the 1984-85 contract. Department chairmen were replaced with coordinators in the contract as the trustees moved. A third edge for the trustees came with acceptance of a two-year contract ending in August 1984 at the conclusion of the summer session rather than the spring semester. This perhaps represented the most significant gain for trustees since a strike called at the beginning of the fall semester, if extended, could threaten job security more than simply losing a summer session.[86]

Only on the issue of a due process clause in the contract did the faculty gain their objective. Clearly this was something to which faculty would seem to be entitled and ought to have been granted without making them feel compelled to man picket lines.[87]

The remaining three issues resulted in standoffs. First of these related to reprisals. The college ended its restraining order and in turn the union dropped its lawsuit over policies. Another standoff related to 30-day notices to the union about changes in evaluation, tenure, discipline, dismissal of tenured faculty and reduction in force and opportunity for the union to make recommendations. The last issue, resulting in an even score, related to changes in pension contributions, addition of language on sabbatical leave of absence, leaves of absence of union officials, registration duties and compensation for coordinators.[88] Thus if one were keeping score the results were three pluses for the trustees, one for the union and three standoffs.

Nobody was jumping for joy at the outcome, least of all the union. One of the union leaders was disheartened by the outcome. "I think that up until 1982 by maintaining the constancy of the contract," he stated, "building a system that worked for the administration and the faculty with neither side getting what they wanted entirely we did arrive at a place that worked. I think we have made a giant step backward now." His displeasure continued: "The contract that came out of the 1982 negotiations was in fact dictated. There is nothing in there that is a compromise. It was purely a board or administrative contract. It was not a true negotiation in that you wind up with a compromise of both positions. That's why I think it was a disaster. We've moved back now to maybe where we were in 1969. I say the union was not effective in 1982."[89] Perhaps the union was badly bruised, but not broken in the 1982 strike.

As always, the clear losers were the students. They had no organization to plead their case. They did manage to stage a general meeting of spokesmen for the trustees/administration and faculty which only reaffirmed the rigidity of both sides. Most students who registered originally were able to complete their summer courses but their education was disrupted.

Doubtless the heaviest loser of all was Prairie State College itself. For 25 years this institution had been struggling with an image crisis. Providing the setting for the longest strike in community college history hardly improved that image. But more sinister than this was the damage to institutional morale which lingered after the settlement. Members of all parts of the college felt this pain and echoed the same sentiments of disconsolation. "I think the greatest personal problem with the college," declared the trustee chairman, "was with the strike in 1982."[90] Another senior faculty member and original union leader agreed. "The strike in 1982 was the lowest point as far as I'm concerned."[91] A long-time administrator echoed the sentiment. "The most depressing time in my tenure at Prairie State College," he said, "was when we had the 1982 strike."[92] Speaking late in 1982, another senior faculty member who recently retired stated "that the most difficult time that the college has faced is right now because of the relationships between the administration and faculty."[93] A staff member repeated the sentiment. The most difficult time for him was "during our work stoppage involving the 1982 strike. It was an exceptionally bad time for us because we had friends on both sides and so it was always a difficult situation."[94]

Perhaps sad is the most apt word to describe the atmosphere at Prairie State College as the college began its second 25 years. But the situation was not insurmountable. As the Cosand Report stated so clearly, there was a solution. It was to lick the wounds, put away the animosities, open communications and develop human understanding by basing interpersonal relationships on mutual respect. Prairie State College was not unique. Other institutions had confronted such frustrations and overcome them. Indeed, a community college which had educated more than 40,000 people and served a community well was prepared to go forward.

CONCLUSION

The history of Prairie State College is essentially one of people--that is, people acting through their own representative system of government at the local or grass roots level. At first there was a small group of men and women with vision and commitment who grasped the opportunity to establish a college, extending to thousands of Americans the advantages of education to help them live fuller, richer lives and adjust to the rapid changes of modern times. Later, other people, who were equally committed, joined the struggle and sustained the commitment through tumultuous times until the community at large recognized the prospects and provided support to carry the venture forward into a second quarter-century.

Behind the actions of these people, however, were many forces bearing down upon the institution. Woven through all of this is a theme--a message is there too--and there is meaning in the development of this college as it relates to the grand scope of American history.

Perhaps the main force bearing on the founding and development of Prairie State College was the American commitment to democratization or accessibility of education--that is, the need for more education for more people.

In the first few years after World War II returning veterans sought college training in huge numbers. This put a strain on colleges and universities to accommodate these returning service people. The "baby boom" of the late 1940s and early 1950s added further stress on existing college facilities. To meet this challenge many universities, like the University of Illinois, opened extension centers in high schools throughout the state. Bloom Township High School was one. But these extension centers could not handle the large numbers seeking higher education. Most of these centers lasted less than two years. In two cases, however, (Danville and Blackhawk) these extensions led to the creation of junior colleges. Others, like Prairie State College, were established under the aegis of high schools. So the combined tradition of more education for more people contributed to the creation of Prairie State College.

Another influence which affected the college was the changing American economy. In the post World War II decades this economy began to change from one which emphasized manufacturing to one which accented services. Though the shift was not sudden, it continued steadily. An economy which is geared to services requires jobs that are different from those needed in manufacturing. Employment patterns shifted toward knowledge workers rather than skilled workers. Existing colleges and universities did not offer extensive training for employment of this type. But Prairie State College met this need. Among the first occupational programs that the college offered were in the health services area such as Nursing, Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene.

But perhaps no force had a greater impact on Prairie State College in its first 2 1/2 decades than the social upheaval that spread across the land and into every segment of American society as the nation reacted with torment to the increased involvement of United States forces and expenditures of lives and treasure in Vietnam. Beginning with student protests on college campuses, turmoil spread to city slums. Violence erupted. Assassinations came. In one instance students engaging in a campus protest were fired upon and killed. Fear and trembling swept the land. Prairie State College felt the impact in several ways.

One way was the installation of the Afro-American or Black Studies program. Long before the United States of America became a nation, Afro-Americans had long sought recognition and appreciation for their contributions to American civilization. After more than two centuries of being shut out, doors began to open to these black Americans in many colleges. To recognize the black heritage and contributions to the United States, programs of Afro-American studies were launched in colleges in the late 1960s. Blacks in the Prairie State College community recognized this void in the curriculum, presented their case with vigor and succeeded in getting a program in Afro-American studies adopted.

Another aspect of the social upheaval was the urge for more involvement in decision making, or "participatory democracy." The United States' involvement in Vietnam was an example of decisions made in somewhat autocratic fashion. In the private sector, middle management felt left out of decisions made at higher levels without consultation. A similar sentiment swept through faculties who felt left out of administrative decisions that directly affected them. This sentiment together with other concerns brought faculty unionization to Prairie State in 1969. This feeling of being left out affected students who pushed for representation on decision-making boards. This led to enactment of legislation providing for non-voting student representation on community college boards and the sitting of a student representative on the Prairie State College Board of Trustees in 1982.

As on campuses throughout the land, student protests against the Vietnam War took place at Prairie State College. On 15 October 1969 classes were dismissed and students joined the nationwide Vietnam Moratorium. And in May 1970 students joined in a sympathy strike for those who were killed in a student protest against the war at Kent State University.

The social upheaval, however, did not proceed without results in terms of legislation. The federal government enacted several laws in the 1960s that buttressed the movement against social imbalances. A landmark piece of such legislation came in the Civil Rights Act (1964). Main purpose of this act was to prohibit discrimination in the use of federal funds. This act eventually affected Prairie State College in the form of affirmative action, which prompted the college into concerted efforts to bring into the work force women and minorities who had been usually overlooked in the hiring process.

Two of the 11 titles in this act had an impact on the College. Title VI prohibited discrimination in federally-assisted programs on the ground of race, color, or national origin; and Title VII established an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to administer the act. Originally, the power of this commission was advisory and investigative only; but four executive orders, and two laws added teeth and extended the Civil Rights Act to educational institutions.

Prairie State College came under these extensions because the college was receiving many federal grants. There were stringent penalties for failure to comply. If a contractor failed to comply, the government compliance agency issued a notice to "show cause" why enforcement proceedings should not be initiated. If the contractor failed to show good cause for failure to comply or to remedy the failure by developing and implementing an acceptable affirmative action plan in 30 days the compliance agency issued a notice of contract cancellation or termination of all contracts and the contractor would be barred from further contract awards.

Under these terms, consequences for Prairie State College were dire indeed, and the college was compelled to act or face losing all federal financial aid. Response was prompt and a self-examination was embarrassing. In 1972 an internal and an external committee formed to study the problem and self evaluation revealed glaring imbalances. The administration was 100 percent male and white; the full-time faculty was 60 percent male and 89 percent white. Minorities were out of balance. Programs, with few exceptions, tended to be middle-class oriented.

A policy came forth, however, which the federal government approved in August 1973. The crisis was over for a few years but in 1981 the Office of Federal Contracts Compliance Review disclosed that the college was not complying with affirmative action. The reviewers recommended that the College needed to consider minority statistics for the district itself rather than the nation as a whole. A nepotism policy, or rather an anti-nepotism policy, was needed, and screening procedures for hiring had to be improved. Another frantic effort by the internal committee produced a plan acceptable to the federal government. The college, like most other private institutions, learned that inadequacies, unintentional though they might be, can be embarrassing. Affirmative action compelled the institution to take action and meet standards that ought to have been taken and met without a reminder and pain of penalty.

The social upheaval of the 1960s did, indeed, bear heavily on Prairie State College at a tender age when the college lacked traditions of long-standing institutions to help it through these stresses and strains. But the social tensions hardly affected the college more than the economy which was infused with rampant inflation.

Essentially, the problem facing the college from the time it became a separate institution was how to bridge the immense gap between soaring costs on one hand and reduced income on the other, especially declining state support and the lowest tax base of any community college in Illinois. The struggle presented a strange, if not interesting, harmony of contrasts. In 1961 before inflation began to take hold, the college operated the summer school with a slight surplus of a few thousand dollars and the dean recommended that perhaps tuition might be waived or at least reduced in view of the favorable financial condition. More realistic board members, however, promptly reminded the considerate administrator that without tuition there would be no college. Within a decade the college was confronting deficit financing that threatened at times to reach a million dollars.

Although rampant inflation that moved into double-digit figures at times remained the fundamental cause, much of the horrendous financial plight of Prairie State College traced to a discrepancy between the funds needed and provided by the state, and a decision on the local tax base which was made in all good faith. At the state level in the original Master Plan of the Board of Higher Education the initial promise was to fund 50 percent of the education operating costs of the community college system through apportionment of funds based on the number of hours of instruction that students take. The percentage of the operating costs for Prairie State College supplied by state funds steadily declined. In recent years this decline in state support dropped from approximately 42 percent to about 30 percent. This underfunding, however, was not necessarily intentional. State appropriations are made based on estimates of needs and state income. Miscalculations often lead to shortages. Underfunding occurred largely because the state did not have as much money to do what the state, through its legislative body and governor, wished to do. Perhaps the worst experience of this sort came in fiscal 1976 when state appropriations failed to meet an unpredicted boom in community college enrollment.

The decision at the local level which contributed to the financial problem, came in March 1966 when the controlling board, then Bloom Township High School, adopted a tax rate of 12 cents for operation of the College when it became independent 1 July 1966. This decision was a responsible error of judgment. In March 1965 the College could operate without financial strain on 12 cents per 100 dollars of equalized assessed evaluation. By setting a conservative tax rate that would support the college, the board expected that the community would appreciate this concern for the local tax burden and would respond favorably if and when a subsequent tax referendum was sought to raise the rate. This group of men and a woman had no way of telling that the Vietnam War and the Mideast petroleum crisis would fire inflation to double digit figures within a decade and render their 12 cent-tax rate woefully inadequate to support the College. Nor could they have any way of knowing that the community would soon forget, if it ever knew, the concern that the board had for their tax dollars as the community proceeded to defeat five attempts to increase the tax rate. Nevertheless, this decision was a millstone around the neck of the college for 13 years.

Within a decade the tax rate became the lowest of any community college in Illinois. Thus with a low tax rate and declining state funds the college soon found itself confronted with hard economic problems. Bold measures were needed and taken. Sale of tax anticipation warrants provided funds for the payroll and bonds were issued to produce a working cash fund. Tuition was raised almost annually until it reached the highest of any community college in the state and the legal limit. Students thus bore the brunt of burden to make financial ends meet for the college. Salary freezes came next.

Some help, however, came from other sources. The assessed evaluation of the district continued to rise though not nearly as fast as inflation. This provided a slight increase in tax funds. Federal funds became more available especially in the way of student financial assistance loans. State equalization formulas were devised to aid financially stricken colleges like Prairie State but this proved a two-edged sword. Prairie State College was poor but not poor enough to get full benefit of the equalization and like other state funds, more help was offered than was delivered.

While struggling to meet these economic realities, five attempts to raise the tax rate failed. In December 1968 came the first try which failed nearly three to one. A second attempt followed five months later in April 1969 and this failed almost two to one. A third effort came 11 months later in March 1970 and this went down nearly two to one. Six years later in November 1976 another effort failed but by less than two to one. Another referendum was called in April 1977, and this went down by seven to five.

In one of its finest demonstrations of unity, the college family pulled together, involved the community and passed a tax referendum to raise the tax rate to 23 cents. This barely raised the tax rate to the state average . But disaster was averted, three successive budgets were balanced and the deficit was eliminated for the first time in 15 years. Relief was short lived, however, and with declining state support, projected budgets over three years indicated another deficit.

Inflation damaged the college in yet another way. This came in the reduction of state funds pledged for construction of the main campus building. Soon after taking office in January 1969, Governor Richard J. Ogilvie proclaimed a freeze on all state construction in Illinois--that is, on all construction supplied by state funds. In the face of rising inflation, few objected to the need for such hard measures but the effect of this draconian measure fell more heavily on some, like Prairie State College, than on others.

In November 1967 the college passed a $7.9 million bond issue for acquisition of land and the construction of a campus, three-fourths of which, or nearly $6 million, was to be supplied by state funds, with the college district supplying the remainder. Thus the governor's proclamation came three months before the college was to go to bid for construction of the permanent campus building. This freeze lasted nearly 2 1/2 years during which time costs increased but state guidelines remained fixed. Thus, the freeze forced the college to go through building plans and eliminate spaces, fixtures and equipment in order to get the cost down to the guidelines established by the state. Due to the freeze the overall reduction in funds was at least $130,000. The end result was that due to inflation and the freeze the college was forced to pay more for less.

Inflation, indeed, took its toll on higher education in Illinois and especially community colleges between 1965 and 1982. Even a doubling of state spending for higher education from $496 million in fiscal 1971 to $1 billion in fiscal 1982 was not enough to keep pace. The Illinois Board of Higher Education pointed out that state spending per student in higher education actually declined by 29 percent between 1971 and 1982, compared with an increase of 137 percent in the consumer price index.

Accountability, or responsibility, is another force which bore upon the college throughout its 25 years. As a public educational institution, PSC's responsibility extends especially to the local community and to the state at large. This accountability is two fold: First, there is a responsibility to provide a curriculum, training and programs that meet standards of accreditation; and second, there is the responsibility to provide this training at a cost that is reasonable and accepted by the community, both state and local.

The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools acts as the regional accreditation agency for public community colleges in terms of general operations, course offerings and qualifications of administration, faculty and staff. Throughout the first 25 years the college maintained accreditation with the North Central Association but not without difficulty at times. In one of its exemplary efforts of cooperation on the part of administration, faculty and staff, Prairie State College, then Bloom Community College, prepared a self-study in 1964 while still under control of Bloom High School. In one of the shortest periods on record the North Central Association gave accreditation to the college in 1965. This accreditation was transferred from the high school to Prairie State College in 1968 but the many economic and social strains of the next several years affected the college adversely to the extent that the North Central accreditation was limited to a private probation for three years in the early 1970s. This, however, was removed in 1975 with the stipulation of an early evaluation and in 1978 the college achieved full accreditation for five years which was extended for five years in 1982.

Accreditation for curriculum offerings, especially those that transfer and articulate with four year colleges, rests with the Illinois Community College Board. Approval of this board is needed before state apportionment funds--that is, state funds per hour of credit--can be received. Again in this area accreditation was strained in at least one instance during the early 1970s. At this time, requirements for the Associate in Arts degree came under special scrutiny of the Illinois Community College Board.

Besides these boards, other agencies must be satisfied for the college to maintain standards. In the health and technical programs national agencies provide standards. The National League of Nursing sets standards for the Nursing program and the American Dental Association, Council on Dental Education sets standards for the Dental Hygiene program. Here again, the college had difficulty at times in meeting the standards. In 1972 the Council on Dental Education put the dental programs on a three-year probation before full accreditation was granted again in 1975.

In addition to accountability for course offerings, economic responsibility represented another constant problem for the college. In addition to operating funds Prairie State needed financial aid to build the campus. For the college to utilize the nearly $6 million of state funds for constructing the campus this construction had to be conducted with the approval of state agencies. From 1965 through 1972 the Illinois Building Authority conducted the initial phases of capital construction on community college campuses. Then in 1972 the Capital Development Board took over all capital construction projects.

With the increase in student financial aid came more accountability to the federal and state governments. Again accountability strained the college in administering federal student aid funds, a large percentage of which were not repaid. Though not unique to Prairie State College, this problem threatened to cut off large sums to students which indirectly affected the financial condition of the college. Thus accountability, or responsibility to provide programs which met standards and to provide these services at reasonable and acceptable costs, presented a constant and at times a serious problem for the college.

A sixth force, localism or parochialism, influenced the college briefly in the late 1960s. This force took the form of intercommunity friction; intracommunity special interest conflicts; and bias on a statewide scale.

Intercommunity acrimony came to the fore briefly in 1966 and 1967 when the three township high school districts (Rich, Crete, Monee) and the Homewood-Flossmoor High School district were in the process of annexing to the Bloom Community College district. The main source of friction in this annexation process came between Chicago Heights, the traditional commercial and industrial center of the four-township area, and Park Forest, the post-World War II suburban model village. With a younger, more educated population Park Forest faced a dilemma of either building a community college of its own or annexing to an existing college district as provided by terms of the Junior College Act of 1965.

Beginning a college of its own presented a prohibitive cost, while annexing to an existing college district would place Park Forest temporarily in a subordinate role. Neither choice was especially attractive to Rich township, essentially the Park Forest community. One solution was to make annexation to Bloom Community College contingent upon building the permanent community college somewhere in Rich Township. But under terms of the act a college had to be constructed within an existing college district, and two days before the annexation vote Bloom Community College selected a Bloom Township site.

Purchase of the property on which to build the college became a complicated and long-term problem lasting five years and evoking intracommunity conflict. Two factors were involved. One was complexity in establishing clear title to the property and the other was the struggle between intracommunity interests. On one hand were those wishing to acquire property to develop a shopping center; on the other hand were those wishing to gain property to build a college. The college interests prevailed mainly because of the right of eminent domain under which the property could be condemned and sold at a designated price.

For five years the issues were threshed out in the courts during which Rich Township officials urged reconsideration of a site in Rich Township, at least two of which seemed attractive. After five years, however, the courts decided in favor of Prairie State College against shopping center interests, and construction began.

While Prairie State College was involved in clearing title and purchasing the property on which to build the college, localism struck at the statewide level in 1968 when dissident taxpayers in Warren County filed a suit charging that the Illinois Junior College Act violated the "one-man, one-vote" rule. A counter-suit, however, testing the constitutionality of the law, succeeded and localism at the state level fell.

Still, localism threatened construction of the college on the chosen site. Because the campus north of Vollmer Road was not in Chicago Heights proper, and because the property south of Vollmer Road on which the main building was to be constructed was platted with streets and alleys which were part of Chicago Heights city property, the City Council of Chicago Heights made annexation of the north campus contingent upon the college paying the city of Chicago Heights $110,000 and the college paying for the widening of Coolidge Street at a cost of $66,000. This action amounted to compelling the taxpayers of the district and state to enrich the coffers of the city of Chicago Heights for the privilege of constructing the college within that city.

So the story of Prairie State College is the story of people compelled to action by various forces and impelled by their own interests, biases and concerns. The question arises: What kind of a college did these forces and these people produce?

The college which emerged is much closer to secondary education than a four-year college or university. It is a college which serves more exclusively for the teaching of students, with less emphasis on scholarship and research, than a four-year college. It is a college whose faculty participation in institutional affairs and faculty professional status are more tenuous than a four-year college. In terms of administrators and administration, the college looks more to secondary than to higher education. Yet the college constitutes a part of the Illinois public community college system and is defined by law as a part of higher education. It demonstrates this with an academic milieu related to faculty service, student freedom, departmentalization, degree requirements and curriculum.

Unlike a four-year institution which serves students from many states and countries, Prairie State College is committed to the community of four townships which it has always served. It serves as a unifying influence for the community of 16 municipalities, serving students of all ages, preschool through senior citizens, all minorities, majorities and social-economic strata.

Thus, the college can be characterized as paradoxical. It's neither a part of higher education at the senior or graduate level on the one hand, nor a part of secondary education on the other, but is something else--a community college.

The college is not without its own accomplishments. In terms of firsts it was the first Illinois junior or community college outside Chicago to construct a community college building explicitly for junior college use. It was the first community college in Illinois outside Chicago to form a faculty union; it was the first junior college in Illinois to offer a Dental Assisting program; and it was the first community college in Illinois, if not the nation, to abolish and never resume intercollegiate athletics.

In at least two respects the college has been unusual. The institution took eight years to acquire property and construct a permanent campus, by far the longest time of any community college in Illinois. And the longest community college teachers strike in Illinois, a record 79 days, took place at Prairie State College.

Nevertheless, of more significance are themes that run through the life of the institution.

Two of these themes emerge clearly. The first is change or more precisely, changes over 25 years. The most important change has been in the college image. This image moved from apathy to recognition and in later years to community-wide support. In the early years the college was visualized as merely an extension of high school through the

13th and 14th grades. A large segment of the community was not aware that the college existed. Students often expressed their attendance at the college in apologetic fashion. In the 1970s, however, when inflation began to pinch family budgets, the college became more attractive and upon completion of the main building the image of the college became clearer, not only physically, but in terms of service to the community as a college with its own identity. The change in image brought more community support.

Another change was the shift from being essentially a transfer institution offering the first two years of courses leading to a baccalaureate degree in the arts and sciences at a four-year college, to one that offered a wide selection of vocational and technical programs, most of which terminated at the completion of two years of coursework. When the college opened in 1958 more than 80 percent of the students enrolled in baccalaureate courses while approximately 10 percent enrolled in vocational courses. A small minority enrolled in general courses not intended for transfer or occupational training. By the early 1980s 43 percent of the students were enrolled in occupational or technical programs while 33 percent were enrolled in transfer-oriented courses.

Another change took place in the profile of the students. From an overwhelming percentage of male students at the outset the student body shifted to a large percentage of females which at times exceeded the male enrollment. Yet another change was from full-time to part-time enrollment. In the first few years most students were full-time; they took at least 12 to 15 hours of coursework. Several years later, however, the majority of students were enrolled part-time with many taking only one course.

There were two other noticeable changes. The first was in enrollment itself. In the first semester of operation enrollment totaled approximately 100 but the total head count in the spring of 1982 was slightly more than 6,000 students. Also dramatic, if not as noticeable, was the rapid growth of the evening school program, or courses offered after 4:00 P.M. When the college opened there was no evening program, but by the early 1970s there were semesters when the number of students enrolled in the evening classes exceeded the number enrolled in the daytime.

A second theme was the discord between the trustees and administration on the one hand and the faculty as represented through the Faculty Union on the other. This discord which began in the late 1960s, took sharper focus when the faculty organized into a union and moved from discord to acrimony over a period of 14 years. In all but one instance, when a contract expired, a strike followed. The faculty strike became a tradition at Prairie State College. Perhaps the most bitter work-stoppage came in 1982 when a strike which "nobody wanted" took place and lasted longer than any strike in Illinois community college history.

From the development of the college there emerges the value and efficacy of cooperation. When all facets of the college, such as the trustees, administration, faculty, and staff cooperated, the institution moved forward with significant strides. For example, all self-study reports for North Central accreditation require a comprehensive look at the institution from within. Beginning with the first such effort in 1964 which achieved recognition in 10 months, the shortest period of time to gain recognition for an Illinois junior college, these studies produced self-searching that maintained accreditation in extremely difficult times. Another example of the efficacy of cooperation came in the successful tax referendum in 1978. After five failures the college formed an internal committee to rally the faculty and staff. Meanwhile, the trustees and administration asked the community to examine the college thoroughly and recommend areas which needed strengthening. Subsequent passage of the tax referendum not only gave the college new strength at a critical time but it may have avoided a massive reduction of educational services.

And last, but perhaps most important, the history of Prairie State College proves that the dedication of the American people to public education when combined with the American system of representative democracy at the grassroots level, presents a force which is extremely difficult to deter, much less overcome.

Dedication to public higher education and representative democracy are essential parts of the American heritage. Both trace to Colonial times. Commitment to higher education began in North America with the establishment of private colleges in the 17th century. With the establishment of the University of Virginia in 1818, public higher education became institutionalized. The junior college movement followed a similar path with many private institutions beginning in the 19th century and the public junior and later community college development coming in the early 20th century.

With ratification of the United States Constitution in 1789 the United States' representative democracy was formalized. One of the key and ingenious concepts of the constitution was the provision for a federal form of government providing for a strong central government and many strong local, grassroots level, state governments. James Madison (1751-1836), the Father of the Constitution, visualized these states as "laboratories of republicanism," and it was one of these laboratories, the state of Illinois, that provided for the development of Prairie State College and the Illinois community college system. Upon the hard work and advice of local junior college educators and citizens, the 74th General Assembly (1965) created the Illinois junior college system, providing for state coordination and support but with local control.

This local control, a two-edged sword, explains much of the development of Prairie State College. On one hand, with control in the hands of the trustees, all painful and poignant issues were discussed before the local public and reported at length in the local press, especially those issues that were controversial though not necessarily the most important or significant. Many times these divisive issues impeded and hampered the college.

The other edge of the sword demonstrates the paradox of democracy. Silence is not the way of democracy; open debate is. And college policy is most effectively framed only after unfettered discussion. Unlike large state universities where policy is established in some room far away from the campus, policy at Prairie State College is established before the local constituents. Many trustee meetings have drawn large public attendance, but at least two produced significant policy changes after open and unfettered discussion. One in January 1969, brought to the attention of the trustees and the public the need for attention to minority concerns, in this case the black minority, for wider consideration in the College curriculum. The consequence was establishment of Afro-American studies which opened the way to a significant enrollment of black students and wider acceptance of the College by blacks. A second example was an all-night session in June 1970, which brought to the attention of the trustees and administration, an array of community, student and faculty concerns that led to greater community responsiveness.

The system also took measures to insure representative democracy through passage of state laws affecting the operation and procedure of trustee boards. In 1957, two months after the college was established, but before it actually opened its doors, the 70th General Assembly enacted an Open Meetings law to insure that "all official meetings at which any legal action is taken by governing bodies of . . . school districts shall be public meetings." Subsequently, the law was amended five times and served as a reminder to the college trustees that the process of carrying out public business needed careful monitoring. Then in 1973 the 78th General Assembly enacted a law to provide for non-voting student representation on governing boards of public junior colleges and universities. This provided wider representation. Thus the system took measures to protect and widen representative democracy and uphold the traditional American belief that open debate makes for community strength.

In retrospect, the first 25 years in the history of Prairie State College provided a case study in the power of American dedication to public higher education, enhanced with the American system of representative democracy, the system which Winston Churchill (1874-1965) so aptly characterized as "the worst system in the world except for all the others."

In prospect the future beckons. As the college faces its second quarter century it must solve its most formidable problem---that is healing the internal friction between the trustees, administration and faculty that has impeded it for more than a decade. If this issue is not dealt with effectively, polarization looms with two sad consequences. First will come paralysis and then a tendency toward authoritarianism. Neither consequence holds encouragement for the future of Prairie State College.

To meet this challenge the college need only look to its past for strength. In its first quarter century when the college put aside strife and friction and turned to cooperation it accomplished great strides. There is no reason to doubt that this approach will not produce more lasting achievements.

This approach can only improve the college's image and as the image improves community support grows. Then the community and the college will go forward together. There are those who openly state that the college in its first 25 years has succeeded beyond expectations. Others see the institution just beginning to realize its potential. Initiative remains at the local level. Only the faint of heart and the prophets of doom and gloom would expect that Prairie State College will not go on to greater service and recognition by a community that is richer and stronger for its being.

SOURCES

Sources for an institutional history, like charity, begin at home with the institution itself. Minutes of the Board of Trustees provide a record for official action. Since the college was under the aegis of Bloom Township High School for most of its first decade these records are found in the minutes of the Bloom Township High School Board of Education between 1955 and 1966. After the college became a separate institution in the Illinois public junior/community college system in 1966 the minutes of the Prairie State College Board of Trustees furnish this authentic evidence. Highlights of each year's accomplishments are found in the State of the College Reports which are annual reports of the president. As one might expect these reports seldom indicate negative developments which are found elsewhere.

Besides written records of the college there are eyewitness accounts. These are found in the Oral History Taped Interviews which comprise the Prairie State College Oral History Project consisting of 43 taped interviews with community leaders, supporters of the college, trustees, administrators, faculty, students and staff-members. These interviews are cataloged and held in the College Archives. They provide first-hand accounts of significant events in the college's history by people who participated.

While serving its own community, the college operated within the Illinois public community college system and these relationships can be traced in the Central Files held in the Illinois Community College Board offices in Springfield.

Direct and official as all these records are, it takes press reports to supply the flavor of events and depict the heated confrontations which punctuated so much of the college's first 25 years. The *Star Publications* provide these accounts. These are 15 suburban newspapers under one ownership published in the south suburbs twice a week. For the most part these newspapers publish identical news except for the front page which is directed toward the particular community it serves.

Reasoning or basis for foundation of the college is found in two documents. First of these is a report of Professor Leonard V. Koos, of the University of Chicago, prepared for Bloom High School on the feasibility of a community college. This is a 12-page report dated 1 March 1946, in the Bloom Township High School administrative files. This eminent educator also provided a report in 1944 outlining the structure of an Illinois statewide community college system much of which was adopted in the system created in 1966. A second document detailing the needs for a Bloom Junior College is found in "A Forward Look in Education," prepared for Bloom Township High school by the College of Education at the University of Illinois (1956).

Formation of the Prairie State College district through annexation provides a stormy chapter in the institution's history. The source for the beginning of this contentious segment is the "Report of Seven District Junior College Study Committee," 15 December 1966, in the College Archives. Composed of representatives from seven high school districts, four of which ultimately annexed to Prairie State College, this committee provided two important services. It served as a forum for the expression of positions for each of the districts regarding the formation of junior college districts in the south suburban region and it furnished data in terms of enrollment figures. Out of this committee came position papers of the districts and ultimately a plan which provided the basis for annexation and creation of the Prairie State College district.

Along with annexation was the thorny issue of selecting and acquiring property on which to locate the newly-formed college. Basis for the site selection is found in "A Report to the Board of Junior College District 515 and to the Site Selection Committee" (The Hazard Report), prepared by Professor William R. Hazard of the School of Education at the

Northwestern University. This report evaluated several possible locations and recommended the site on which the college permanent campus is located. Acquisition of property for the site, however, consumed several years and is traced in *3 Illinois Appellate Court Reports* at 1006 to 1011; the Chicago Heights Council Proceedings; and the Campus Property Acquisition files in the archives. Construction of the main campus building can be traced in the Main Building Construction and Campus Planning files in the archives; and in the Illinois Community College Board Construction files in the Illinois Community College Board offices in Springfield.

Student life records are found in student newspapers. The original college newspaper, *The Viking Star*, began publication soon after the founding of the college and continued to publish monthly for several years. With formation of Prairie State College *The Prairie Statement* became the student newspaper in 1967-68. There was no regular schedule of publication for this paper and there were gaps in 1970 and 1980. Archive holdings are extensive if not complete through 1982. During the turmoil of the late 1960s there were "underground" student newspapers published sporadically.

In terms of Illinois community college faculty unionization Prairie State College played an integral part and provided the basis for a case study. Illinois community college faculty unionization began in the courts with the case of the Chicago Division of the Illinois Education Association v. Board of Education of the City of Chicago in *222 N. E. 2d at 243* (1966). This case and decision established a precedent and provided the impetus for community college faculty strikes. Minutes of the Prairie State College trustees and the *Star Publications* supply the basis for tracing the college's collective bargaining history. The 1982 strike is detailed in Board of Community College District 515, Prairie State College v. Prairie State College Federation of Teachers, Local 3186, et. al. in *Cook County. No 82 CH 4710*.

A case study of collective bargaining as it relates to Prairie State College remains to be written. Perhaps the closest approximation is William E. Patton's "The Critical Incidents Leading to the Organization of Collective Bargaining Agents in Suburban Cook County Colleges," an unpublished dissertation, 1979. This details the organization of the Prairie State College teachers' union as the first of several community college unions which formed in the Chicago suburbs in the early 1970s.

A series of three articles appearing September 29, October 3 and 6, 1974 in the *Star Publications* focuses on the consequences of faculty unionization at Prairie State College.

At least two books look at faculty unionization at four-year institutions of higher education. One of these is George W. Angell's *Faculty and Teacher Bargaining: The Impact of Unions on Education*, (1980). Another is Everett C. Ladd Jr., and Seymour M. Lipset's *Professors, Unions, and American Higher Education* (1973). This short book is a superb analysis replete with new insights into the development of collective bargaining in four-year colleges and universities.

A close look at community college collective bargaining is found in E. D. Duryea and Robert S. Fisk's, *Faculty Unions and Collective Bargaining* (1973). This is a survey and overview of collective bargaining in higher education throughout the United States early in the 1970s. Chapter Five focuses on community colleges and presents insights and analyses pertinent to Prairie State College. These last two titles provide an extensive picture of faculty collective bargaining beyond the secondary level in American education through the late 1980s.

Research on the tumultuous decade of the 1960s has barely begun. Though it makes no claim to be the definitive history of these years, William L. O"Neill's *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the 1960s*, (1971) presents a keen interpretation of the political, social, economic and cultural revolt that permeated that decade. Two thrusts motivated this movement identified by some as the Second American Revolution. First was the spontaneous reaction at the grass-roots level punctuated by demonstrations which varied from peaceful to riotous. This aspect as it relates to Prairie State College is detailed and documented in various sections of this book. A second thrust, however, came from the federal government through laws enacted as part of the Great Society program of the 1960s. These began with and stemmed from "The Civil Rights Act of 1964." found in 78 *United States Statutes at Large at 241-168*; "The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972" in 86 *United States Statutes at Large* at 102-113; and Executive Order 11246 (Amended by 11375) located in *United States Code: Congressional and Administrative News, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967. Vol. 2, 3519-3521.* Prairie State College's compliance is documented in two reports: "Prairie State College Equal Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action Program, 9 August 1973"; and "Prairie State College Plan for Affirmative Action, 1 July 1981-30 June 1982," both found in the archives.

There is no single, definitive history of the American junior/community college. There are, however, several treatments of different periods of the movement. A satisfactory overall picture can be attained from three books. First is James W. Thornton's *The Community Junior College*, (1966) which provides an excellent background of the junior and community college through 1966. Then there is Edward A. Gallagher's "From Tappan to Lange: Evolution of the Public Junior College," (1968). This is a doctoral dissertation at the University of Michigan which emphasizes the late 19th and early 20th century development. Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer *The American Community College* (1982), presents a comprehensive and interpretive analysis of community colleges in the 1980s.

At the state level the Illinois junior/community college movement, like the national development, needs a comprehensive history. Fortunately, the development can be traced through two unpublished dissertations. These are Matthew J. Meisterheim's "A History of the Public Junior College in Illinois, 1900-1965," an unpublished doctoral dissertation at Northern Illinois University, 1974; and Thomas L. Hardin's "A History of the Community Junior College in Illinois: 1901-1972," a doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois, 1975. These theses complement each other albeit they overlap. Nevertheless, they fill a void in Illinois educational history.

Easily the most definitive account of the period from 1946 through 1980 comes from two contributions of Gerald W. Smith, original executive secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board. First of these is his *Memoirs* (4 vols. 1977). Stemming from this is his *Illinois Junior-Community College Development 1946-1980 (1980)*. In these two works Smith presents an eye-witness account of the salient developments in the Illinois public junior college system at the state level. If these efforts lack anything, it is an analysis and interpretation of the significant events detailed. They are, however, a fine chronicle and provide a prime source for the ultimate history of the state system. Histories of individual Illinois community colleges are practically non-existent. One exception is Mary Miller's, *A Chance for All: A Historical Diary of the Early Years of Danville Junior College, (1980)*. This void is a sad commentary on one of the country's leading state systems. This gap needs to be filled.

Since the Prairie State College district consists of 16 municipalities besides some unincorporated areas, its history begins with the histories of these municipalities. For Glenwood and Richton (Richton Park) A. T. Andreas's *History of Cook County, Illinois, (1884)* provides the main source. The other communities within the college district have more specific histories of their own.

For Chicago Heights, Louise A. Michalek, a local historian, offers perhaps the strongest general history in her "History of Chicago Heights," (1966) which has appeared in modified versions in several places around the community. Other sources consulted were "Highlights of Chicago Heights," published by the League of Women Voters (1953); and "City of Chicago Heights," a booklet commemorating the 90th anniversary of the city (1982). Industrial strength and aspects of the city are found in many places. Among the most substantial are "Industrial Survey of Chicago Heights 1927," a survey prepared by the Chicago Heights Chamber of Commerce; "Chicago Heights in the Post War Era," (1943); and Alfred H. Meyer and Paul F. Miller's "Manufactural Geography of Chicago Heights, Illinois," in *Indiana Academy of Science*, 66:209-229 (1957). These sources are found in the Chicago Heights Area Chamber of Commerce files. For Bloom Township High School, Florence Wallace's and Hildur Soderman's "A History of Bloom Township High School" (unpublished 1951), is the source.

Edited by Audrey DeMuth, Ettarose Lazaros and Phyllis Monks' *Crete, 1836-1980, (1980)* is the source for origins of the village of Crete while the background of Country Club Hills is found in "Silverfest, Head for the Hills '83," a special section which appeared in *Star Publications*. Edna Mason's "A Brief History of East Chicago Heights (unpublished 1978)," is the basis for information on East Chicago Heights.

Michael J. Hinko's *History of Homewood* (1976), is a presentation of Homewood's origins while Homewood and Flossmoor are considered together in Anna B. Adair and Adele Sandberg's *Indian Trails to Tollways: The Story of the Homewood-Flossmoor Area* (1968). Olympia Fields is added to this pairing in *Know Your Towns: A Guide to the Villages of Homewood, Flossmoor, and Olympia Fields* (1979) prepared by the League of Women Voters.

Continuing down the interurban railroad line to the southwestern corner of the college district "Matteson 1855-1980: 125th Anniversary," a special edition of the *Star Publication* 17 August 1980, tells the origins of this village while Muriel Milne in *Our Roots are Deep: A History of Monee, Illinois*, does the same for Monee.

Origins and early development of Park Forest are found in William H. Whyte Jr.'s study: *The Organization Man* (1957), which catapulted the village into national attention. A better account of the actual origins of the village is found in Edward Barry's "Chicagoland's Brand New Town," in the *Omaha World Herald Magazine*, 13 July 1952. These sources are found in the Park Forest Library.

For the two most recent municipalities established in the college district, Park Forest South (University Park) and Sauk Village, "Know Your Town: Park Forest South," an undated pamphlet published by the League of Women Voters in the Park Forest South Library tells the origins of that village while *Villager*, 19 May 1982 in the Sauk Village of Public Library describes the origins of Sauk Village.

Origins of South Chicago Heights can be found in *The Past: 75 Years of Progress to the Present 1982*, a booklet published by the village of South Chicago Heights. The same for Steger can be found in Norma Zajicek "The Village Founded on a Piano," an unpublished paper in the Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library.

Population figures for the college district by decades are based on the Twelfth Census of the United States taken in 1900 and the Thirteenth Census of the United States taken in 1910 held in the Illinois State Archives at Springfield. Figures for the decades 1920 through 1960 are based on the United States Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Censuses found in the Governors State University Library. For 1970 and 1980 population figures are based on reports of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, Chicago, Ill. 1983, also located in the Governors State University Library.

From its origin the college district has represented a microcosm of United States society offering a lush field of study for sociologists that has been neglected for the most part. Two recent studies tend to correct this oversight. One is "The Hill: The History of An Ethnic Neighborhood," a report prepared by the Department of Planning and Zoning in Chicago Heights and made possible through a grant from Cook County under the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act. This is a solid piece of work made poignant by a series of interviews with past and present Hill neighborhood residents, census data, newspaper articles, birth records, naturalization records and other books written about Chicago Heights. It is a case study of assimilation of ethnic groups in an urban industrial community. The Mexican-American minority is detailed in Juan R. Garcia's *A History of the Mexican-American People in the Chicago Heights, Illinois Area*, (1975). This is a remarkable work by a Prairie State College alumnus who traces the origin and development of the district's fastest-growing minority. More of this type of work is needed to add knowledge to the ultimate history of these people in the United States who, like other minorities, have contributed more than is realized to the country's history.

NOTES

Abbreviations appearing in the endnotes are as follows:

A	Archives of Prairie State College
BTHSAF	Bloom Township High School Administrative Files
CCCCC	Circuit Court of Cook County, Chancery Division
CCCCL	Circuit Court of Cook County Law Division
CHACCF	Chicago Heights Area Chamber of Commerce Files
CHPL	Chicago Heights Public Library
CPAF	Campus Property Acquisition Files in the Archives
CPF	Campus Planning Files in the Archives
CPL	Crete Public Library
CST	*Chicago Sun-Times*
CT	*Chicago Tribune*
DCF	Dominic J. Callaci files
ECHPL	East Chicago Heights Public Library
GPL	Grand Prairie Library
GSUC	Governors State University Collection of general legal research materials in the Governors State University Library
GSUL	Governors State University Library
HPL	Homewood Public Library
IACJCP	Illinois Association of Community and Junior College Papers in State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois
ICCCEF	Illinois Community College Central Files in Illinois Community College Board Office, Springfield, Illinois
ICCCF	Illinois Community College Construction Files in Illinois Community College Board Office, Springfield, Illinois
ICCTAF	Illinois Community College Trustees Association Files in Illinois Community College Trustees Office, Springfield, Illinois
MBCF	Main Building Construction Files in the Archives
MBTHS	Minutes of Bloom Township High School Board of Education, Chicago Heights, Illinois
MICCB	Minutes of Illinois Community College Board in Springfield, Illinois
MPSC	Minutes of Prairie State College Board of Trustees
NYT	*New York Times*
OKP	Otto Kerner Papers in Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois
OHTI	Oral History Taped Interviews in the Archives in of Prairie State College
OPF	Office of the President of Prairie State College Files
ORP	Office of Russell Publications
OVPASF	Office of the Vice-President for Administrative Services of Prairie State College Files
PFPL	Park Forest Public Library
PFR	*Park Forest Reporter*
PFSL	Park Forest South Library
PS	*Prairie Statement*
PSCLC	Prairie State College Learning Center
PSCTUF	Prairie State College Teachers' Union Files
ROBP	Robert O. Birkhimer Papers in Illinois State Historical Library Springfield, Illinois
SP	*Star Publications*
SSCHPL	Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library
SVPL	Sauk Village Public Library
V/TBCF	Vocational/Technical Building Construction Files in the Archives
WSJ	*Wall Street Journal*

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75. MPSC, 29 July 1982.
76. *SP*, 5 August 1982.
77. *SP*, 12 August 1982 *CST*, 20 August 1982 and MPSC, 19 August 1982.
78. OHTI, G. Fox.
79. OPF, "Cosand Report," prepared by Joseph P. Cosand for the Trustees of Prairie State College, 26 October 1982, 2.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. *SP*, 12 August 1982 and 19 August 1982.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
89. OHTI, W. E. Patton.
90. OHTI, J. Hawkins.
91. OHTI, R. Peterson.
92. OHTI, G. Fox.
93. OHTI, G. Chamberlain.
94. OHTI, R. Marthaler.

CHRONOLOGY OF PRAIRIE STATE COLLEGE
1925-1982

		1925
5	May	Bloom Township High School Superintendent E. L. Boyer inquires about requirements for establishing a junior college.
		1944
13	December	Bloom Superintendent R. D. Meade recommends establishing a junior college.
		1945
	February	Several organizations urge establishment of a Bloom Junior College.
		1946
1	March	Professor Leonard V. Koos issues a report that Bloom Junior College is feasible.
16	April	Bloom board decides against establishing a junior college because of limited finances and crowded conditions.
13	July	President's Commission on Higher Education is appointed to examine the functions of higher education in the United States and the means by which this function can best be performed.
		1955
9	July	Bloom board adopts a resolution to establish a junior college as part of the common school district.
13	October	Sixty-ninth Illinois General Assembly approves law (House Bill No. 886) to support junior college education at a level of $100 per student.
		1956
30	November	Bloom board moves to purchase property between Riegel Road and Dixie Highway and between Tenth Street and the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Chicago Heights on which to construct a junior college building.
2	December	University of Illinois Office of Field Services Report, "A Forward Look In Education," strongly recommends a Bloom Junior College.
		1957
13	January	"Bloom Township Community College" is adopted as the name of the future college.
25	May	Bloom Township voters pass a referendum to establish a junior college under control of the Bloom Township High School Board (yes votes-945, no votes-479).
8	July	Seventieth General Assembly raises junior college state support to $200 per student (House Bill No. 860).
9	July	Illinois Commission of Higher Education Act (Senate Bill No. 547) is approved to analyze future aims, needs and requirements of higher education in Illinois.
11	July	An Act in Relation to Meetings (House Bill No. 699) is approved, requiring public boards to hold open meetings.

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1958

21	April	Albert H. Martin is named Dean of Bloom Community College.
	July	Ground is broken for College Center Building.
14	August	In-district tuition is set at $6.67 per semester-hour equal to amount of state reimbursement.
8	September	Bloom Community College opens with first classes held in the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

1959

	April	Basic Management program begins for Ford Motor Company employees.
8	July	An Act to Amend the School Code (Senate Bill No. 192) is approved, providing that high schools without a junior college may hold referendums to levy tuition taxes for their graduates to attend a junior college.
15	July	Seventy-first General Assembly approves House Bill No. 893 providing that "any school district maintaining a recognized junior college...shall be entitled to claim an apportionment...each school year...of $7.60 for each semester-hour... for each resident pupil."
10	September	Non-resident tuition is set at $11.66 per semester hour.
10	September	First classes are held in College Center, the first building in Illinois outside Chicago constructed specifically for a junior college, erected at a cost of $300,000.
	November	*The Viking Star* student newspaper publishes first issue.
1	December	Bloom Junior College loses to La Grange, 69-68, in first basketball game.

1960

17	January	College Center Building is dedicated.
15	June	First commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 30 Associate in Arts degrees awarded.
	June	In-district full-time tuition is set at $50 per semester, and out-of-district full-time tuition is set at $175.
	June	First summer session is held.

1961

25	May	In-district full-time tuition is set at $75 per semester, and out-of-district full-time tuition is set at $175 effective fall semester.
7	June	Second commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 35 Associate in Arts degrees awarded.
22	August	An Act Creating a Board of Higher Education (Senate Bill No. 766) is approved, with mandate to draw up a Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois.
	September	Dental Assisting program opens with 16 students as the first one-year Dental Assisting Program in Illinois.

1962

6	June	Third commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 31 Associate in Arts degrees and 12 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
9	September	Intercollegiate golf competition begins.
	September	Science wing addition to College Center Building opens.
18	December	Vocational Educational Act (Public Law 88-210) is enacted, recognizing junior colleges as institutions for vocational/technical training, thus providing additional funding.

1963

12	June	Fourth Commencement held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 38 Associate of Arts degrees and 15 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
	September	Intercollegiate golf competition begins.
	September	Science wing addition to College Center Building opens.

1964

	January	American College Testing (ACT) scores are required for freshman admission beginning with fall 1965 semester.
16	April	In-district tuition rate is adopted for employees of local industries whose tuition is paid by employer.
	May	Self-study report is submitted to North Central Association of Colleges to obtain accreditation.
10	June	Fifth commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 32 Associate in Arts degrees and 14 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
2	July	The Civil Rights Act (Public Law 88-352) is enacted, establishing a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity providing basis for subsequent affirmative action.
	August	Instructional program is organized into four divisions including language arts and humanities, social science, natural science and mathematics.
	September	New programs begin in two-year secretarial training, two-year mechanical technology and real estate training.

1965

12	January	*Nu Sigma*, Chapter of *Phi Theta Kappa*, National Honor Society for Junior Colleges is established with five original members: James Ammirati, Rufus Bradford, Frank Gereg, sophomores; and Audrey Kendall and Marion Senger, freshmen.
31	March	North Central Association of Colleges grants full accreditation.
13	April	Bloom Junior College loses to Wright 3-0 in first intercollegiate baseball game.
9	June	Sixth commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 32 Associate in Arts degrees and 12 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.

15	July	The Public Junior College Act (House Bill 1710) is approved creating an Illinois statewide public junior college system effective 1 July 1966.
	September	American Negro History course begins.
27	October	American Association of University Professors (AAUP) chapter is established.
28	October	Dental Assisting program is named: "The Myron W. Bardige School of Dental Assisting of Bloom Community College."
11	November	Higher Education Act (Public Law 89-329) provides funds to strengthen colleges and financial assistance for students.

1966

13	January	Application is filed for Class I Junior College status.
22	March	Tax rate of .09 percent or 9 cents per $100 of equalized assessed evaluation for educational purposes; and .03 percent or 3 cents per $100 of equalized assessed evaluation for building purposes is adopted for Bloom Community College.
22	March	Tuition of $5 per semester hour is adopted for all students to comply with Illinois Junior College Act.
18	April	Administration is reorganized creating positions of director of curriculum and instruction and director of student personnel.
23	May	Faculty Association is established.
3	June	Bloom Community College achieves Class II status and high school board organizes as college board to carry on college business.
8	June	Seventh commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 32 Associate in Arts degrees and 17 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
9	June	Illinois Junior College Board accepts Bloom Community College's application for Class I status and assigns District No. 515 designation.
21	June	Cook County Office of Superintendent of Schools accepts Bloom Community College for organization as Class I Junior College.
1	July	Illinois Junior College Act becomes effective, establishing a statewide system of public junior colleges.
14	July	Albert H. Martin is named first president of Bloom Community College.
14	July	Bloom High School Board divests itself of control of Bloom Community College, opening the way for an election to name a Class I College Board of Trustees.
13	August	Original Bloom Community College Board of Trustees is elected consisting of Dale Collins, H. D. Cockerham, Henry Nicolai, Edward A. Opila, H. Robert Sauer, F. Carr Price and Cornelius Verduin.
17	August	Board of Trustees organizes, naming Chairman Dale Collins and Secretary Edward A. Opila.

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1	September	Albert H. Martin resigns presidency to accept position as Associate Secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board.
9	September	FY67 budget is adopted providing total budget of $908,500.
12	September	Associate degree in Nursing program begins.
15	September	Richard G. Sherman is named interim president.
3	November	Site-selection Committee is chosen to locate permanent campus.
8	November	Trustees visit Crete-Monee High School District Board to discuss annexation.
9	November	Despite absence of Illinois public law, court decision in Chicago Division of the Illinois Education Association v. Board of Education of the City of Chicago (222 N.E. 2d 243), holds that boards of education may enter into collective bargaining agreements with teachers.
15	November	Trustees visit Homewood-Flossmoor High School District Board to discuss annexation.
28	November	Trustees visit Rich Township High School District Board to discuss annexation.
1	December	Agreement is reached to use facilities at St. James Hospital for Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene programs.
1	December	Administrative Internship program is approved to help train junior college administrators.
5	December	Trustees visit Peotone High School District to discuss annexation.
12	December	Trustees visit Beecher High School District to discuss annexation.
15	December	Computer Technology program is approved to begin with Fall 1967 semester.
	December	Intercollegiate wrestling competition begins.

1967

19	January	Settlement of assets is completed with Bloom High School whereby the high school pays the college $300,000 as its share of the assets and the college pays Bloom High School $120,000 for rent and services.
19	January	Dental Hygiene program is approved, effective fall 1967 semester.
27	January	Severe winter storm forces first closing of Bloom Community College for two days (Friday and Monday).
2	February	Representatives of Rich Township, Homewood-Flossmoor, and Crete-Monee Township High School Districts attend trustees' meeting as unofficial representatives.
16	March	Rental of facilities is approved for classes at Temple Anshe Sholom and for bookstore at Bloom Market area.

6	April	Site Selection Committee recommends permanent campus be located between Halsted and Coolidge streets and between Vollmer Road and Joe Orr Road; that is, Site Number One or Site A, as recommended in the Hazard Report.
8	April	Rich Township, Crete-Monee Township and Homewood-Flossmoor High School Districts vote by 7 to 1 margin to annex to Junior College District No. 515 (Bloom Community College) effective 1 July 1967.
20	April	Administration is reorganized to create seven new positions predominantly at the third level.
1	May	Tuition is raised from $5 to $7 per credit hour.
4	May	Procedure for changing curriculum adopted.
13	May	Perkins and Will architectural firm is selected for construction of permanent campus.
13	May	Music program is approved to begin with fall 1967 semester.
18	May	Trustees move to record in the Board of Junior College District No. 515 minutes that "the board has approved the recommendation of the Site Selection Committee for the selection of Site Number One or Site A."
25	May	Richard W. Hostrop is appointed president of Bloom Community College as of 1 July 1967.
25	May	Police Science one-month training course begins.
7	June	Eighth commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 53 Associate in Arts degrees; 3 Associate in Applied Science degrees; and 20 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
9	June	Illinois Junior College Board approves permanent campus site thus qualifying Bloom Community College for sharing state funds.
15	June	Non-resident fees are waived for summer 1967 session for students in those districts which annexed to the college effective 1 July 1967.
15	June	Adult Education program in General Cultural Studies is approved to begin with fall 1967 semester.
17	June	Industrial Electricity Training program in cooperation with Manufacturers Association of Chicago Heights is approved.
1	July	Richard W. Hostrop becomes third president of Bloom Community College.
24	July	An Act in Relation to Meetings is amended (House Bill No. 476) prescribing that all meetings of school districts shall be "public meetings" with exceptions.
20	August	FY68 budget is adopted providing total budget of $1,600,000.
7	September	Out-of-district tuition is set at $13 per semester hour, and out-of-state tuition is set at $23.50 per semester hour.

21	September	Work Study program and Economic Opportunity Grants in conjunction with federal government are approved.
5	October	Prairie State College is selected as name of Illinois Junior College District No. 515.
2	November	Lease with Anshe Sholom Temple is terminated for classroom space utilized during fall 1967 semester.
10	November	IJCB gives final approval for Prairie State College permanent campus site.
10	November	College begins condemnation proceedings under right of eminent domain on property for permanent campus in Circuit Court of Cook County: Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Wagner, Lovelace, Borrowdale et. al. covering 229 lots.
18	November	Voters of Prairie State College District approve $7.9 million bond issue for acquisition of land and construction of a college campus by overall margin of 3 to 1.
23	November	College joins GT-70's consortium to improve instructional efficiency.
14	December	Administration reorganization is approved to create new positions predominantly at the second level.
15	December	Age Discrimination in Employment Act (Public Law 90-202) is enacted to prohibit age discrimination in employment of people in 40 to 70 age group.
21	December	Rental facilities are approved to house Theater Arts program.

1968

18	January	Instructional divisions and departments are organized.
18	January	Prairie State College Faculty Women's Club is recognized by trustees.
29	January	Audio-tutorial instruction methods begin in teaching English Composition, American History, and Typing and Shorthand.
	January	Second Police Science course begins for one month.
15	February	Moody's Investors Service grants College "provisional 'A' rating."
21	February	Gopher is selected as college mascot.
7	March	Bonds in the amount of $3.5 million are sold to Northern Trust Company of Illinois at 4.68544 percent interest.
21	March	Physical Science and Chemistry offerings are reorganized and modernized to begin with 1968 fall semester.
2	April	North Central Association of Colleges, transfers accreditation of Bloom Community College to Prairie State College.

4	April	Dissident taxpayers in Warren County charge that the Illinois Junior College Act violates "one-man, one-vote" rule in the case of People v. Frank F. Fowle, et. al., thus delaying sale of bonds and construction of Prairie State College's new campus.
13	April	Lester K. Kloss and James R. McIntyre, first non-Bloom Township residents, are elected trustees in first trustee election involving enlarged Prairie State College District.
2	May	Purchase of IBM 360, Model 25 computer is approved.
7	May	College is selected as one of 12 colleges to participate in experimental project in the teaching of junior college physics.
7	May	Kankakee County State's Attorney files case to test constitutionality of the Illinois Junior College Act in People v. Ralph E. Francis, et. al. 40 Ill. Reports 2d at 204 (1969).
5	June	Ninth commencement is held in Bloom Township High School auditorium with 58 Associate in Art degrees; 30 Associate in Applied Science degrees; and 13 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
10	June	FY69 budget is adopted providing total budget of $2.1 million.
13	June	College is selected to participate in Kellogg and Danforth Foundation grants to develop community service functions.
20	June	Summer enrollment shows 53 percent increase in headcount and 55 percent increase in credit hours over summer 1967.
20	June	Contract is approved with Imperial Equipment Corporation of West Lafayette, Ind., for construction of temporary buildings on interim campus north of Vollmer Road.
27	June	Trustees move to petition City of Chicago Heights for annexation of property north of Vollmer Road on which interim campus will be located.
2	July	Child Development program, first of its kind in the nation, is approved to begin with fall 1968 semester.
3	July	Illinois Supreme Court renders favorable decision in People v. Ralph E. Francis, et. al., upholding the Illinois Junior College Act in all aspects.
18	July	Ground is broken for construction of six temporary buildings on interim campus north of Vollmer Road.
18	July	Computer Technology, Mental Health Technology, Police Science Technology, Secretarial Science, Aviation Career Training and Commercial Art programs are approved.
26	July	After a May visit, North Central Association of Colleges affirms transfer of accreditation from Bloom Community College to Prairie State College with provision that a review visit take place within four years.

1	**August**	Resolution is approved that Prairie State College become the coordinating agency within the college district for adult education, continuing education and university extension for 1968-69.
9	**September**	Chapman and Cutler, legal firm, after decision in People v. Francis et. al., offers "favorable opinion" a second time on sale of $3.5 million of bonds for Prairie State College.
19	**September**	Resolution is approved to repeal sale of $3.5 million of bonds dated 21 March 1968; change the date from 31 August 1968 to 1 September 1968; and accept bid of Harris Trust and Savings Bank for the sale of $3.5 million of bonds thus saving the college district substantial interest payments.
19	**September**	Fire Science Technology program is approved.
7	**October**	Classes open on interim campus north of Vollmer Road.
7	**November**	Media Technology program is approved.
19	**November**	College logo is adopted.
21	**December**	Two propositions to raise tax rates are defeated: first, to increase educational rate from .09 percent to .179 percent (yes votes-725; no votes-1,801); second, to increase building rate from .03 percent to .10 percent (yes votes-716; no votes-1,812.
		1969
16	**January**	Tuition is waived for "Golden-Agers" persons 62 years of age or older.
30	**January**	Trustees hold first Fifth Thursday (Public Forum) meeting.
5	**February**	Governor Ogilvie announces freeze on funds affecting construction of public buildings, including public junior colleges, as an economy and anti-inflation measure.
5	**February**	College initiates condemnation proceedings on property for permanent campus in Circuit Court of Cook County in two cases: Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Mario Marks et. al., covering 50 additional lots; and Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Earle F. Cox, et. al., covering 14 additional lots.
6	**February**	Faculty holds meeting in Building C to consider unionization.
6	**February**	General Citizens' Advisory Charter Council is approved.
19	**February**	Citizens' Advisory Council is organized.
	February	Crete-Monee School District 201-U joins as a participating member of the Prairie State College coordinated Continuing Education program.
20	**March**	Afro-American (Black) Studies program is approved.
10	**April**	Architectural Technology, Drafting Technology and Structural Steel Technology programs are approved.

12	April	Two propositions to raise tax rates are defeated: first, to increase educational rate from .09 percent to .17 percent (yes votes-3,002; no votes-5,249); second, to increase building rate from .03 percent to .08 percent (yes votes-2,842; no votes-5,324).
17	April	Cook County College Teachers Union, Local 1600, AFT, AFL-CIO, hereinafter cited as Teachers' Union, is recognized as bargaining agent for full-time faculty.
5	June	Teachers' Union conducts "informational picketing ... to emphasize their decisions with regard to several key issues concerning the college."
11	June	Tenth commencement is held in Bloom Township High School with 82 Associate in Arts degrees, 56 Associate in Applied Science degrees, and 18 Dental Assistant certificates awarded.
15	June	Ground is broken for Maintenance Building K, first permanent campus building.
15	June	Ground is broken for four additional temporary buildings on interim campus.
16	June	Teachers' Union calls first strike.
18	June	Classes resume after two-day strike and tentative agreement between the Teachers' Union and trustees.
19	June	One-year contract is ratified between trustees and Teachers' Union.
14	July	Social Service Aide and Teacher Aide programs are approved.
1	August	Illinois Income Tax (Public Act 76-261) takes effect providing basis for increase in state financial support for community colleges.
18	September	Faculty recommendation of health and major medical insurance awarded to Blue Cross/Blue Shield and life insurance to Horace Mann is approved.
29	September	FY70 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $2,827,369.
	September	First classes are held in four additional temporary buildings on interim campus.
2	October	Trustees move that a representative of the Faculty Senate and a representative of the Student Senate be seated at all board meetings.
10	October	An Act in Relation to Public Meetings (Public Act 76-1914) is amended relating to campus security and safety.
15	October	College joins nationwide Vietnam Moratorium, dismissing classes.
22	October	Resolution is approved to exchange Prairie State College's allocation of $5 million in state funds for building purposes to a later date because of land ownership complications.
	October	K (Maintenance) Building is occupied.

29	October	College's condemnation proceedings on property for permanent campus in Circuit Court of Cook County are consolidated into a single case of Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Wagner, Lovelace, Borrowdale et. al., covering 312 lots "to be tried as one parcel of property" with a single verdict and judgment covering compensation for the whole.
6	November	Agreement is reached with City of Chicago Heights for fire protection on basis of annual fee and a fee for each fire call.
6	November	Interim-campus site property purchase is completed consisting of approximately 50 acres north of Vollmer Road and west of Halsted Street.
24	November	Cook County Circuit Court decides for Prairie State College in consolidated case of Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Wagner, Lovelace, Borrowdale et.al., but defendants appeal.

1970

15	January	College celebrates Martin Luther King Day.
3	March	Two propositions to raise tax rates are defeated: first, to increase educational rate from .09 percent to .17 percent (yes votes-1,849 and no votes-5,105. Second to increase the Building vote from .03 percent to .08 percent, yes votes 1,833 and no votes 5,104.)
2	April	Computer Operator program is approved.
4	May	National Guard troops fire at and kill four students at Kent State University, protesting against U.S. troops movement into Cambodia.
8	May	Prairie State College students conduct sympathy strike in protest of slaying of four students on Kent State, Ohio, campus.
21	May	Transportation and Interior Design programs are approved.
12	June	Eleventh commencement is held in Homewood-Flossmoor High School auditorium with 95 Associate in Arts degrees, 73 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 53 various certificates awarded.
15	June	Teachers' Union calls strike.
18	June	Trustees hold marathon all-night meeting adjourning at 5:00 a.m. next day.
22	June	Classes resume while negotiations between trustees and Teachers' Union continue in federal mediation.
26	June	Tentative agreement is reached in federal mediation between trustees and Teachers' Union.
1	July	Marketing and Mid-management curriculums are approved.
16	July	Prairie State College Gopher Football Club, sponsored by Student Senate, is approved.
23	July	Trustees terminate contract of Richard W. Hostrop effective immediately.
27	July	Ashley Johnson is named interim president.

10	August	Application is filed with Illinois Junior College Board to work with the Illinois Building Authority (IBA) on construction of Prairie State College permanent campus Phase I.
15	August	Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) is formed to advance the original functions of the Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois especially as they relate to community colleges.
30	August	Two-year agreement is ratified between trustees and Teachers' Union.
24	September	FY71 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $3,142,112.

1971

21	January	Automotive Technology program is approved, to begin 1971 fall semester.
	January	R. W. Hostrop files suit against the college alleging that he was wrongfully terminated in violation of his rights of free speech and due process. (R. W. Hostrop v. Board of Junior College District 515, 337 F. Supp. 977, 1972)
18	February	Spring semester enrollment shows headcount of 3,627--an increase of 12 percent over spring 1970 semester and an increase of 10 percent in full-time equivalent (FTE).
29	April	Lawsuit is filed: T. Rouse et. al. v. A.S. Hannagen et. al. (71-L-5219 in Circuit Court of Cook County) in which plaintiff seeks to declare 10 April 1971 trustees' election void.
17	May	Trustees approve resolution establishing a Working Cash Fund.
27	May	Finance and Credit Management program is approved to begin with fall 1971 semester.
9	June	Twelfth commencement is held in American Legion Hall, Chicago Heights, with 108 Associate in Arts degrees, 99 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 43 various certificates awarded.
10	June	General Studies Certificate program is approved.
22	June	Ashley Johnson is appointed president of the college.
24	June	Air, Water and Wastewater Control Technology program is approved.
8	July	Summer enrollment shows headcount of 1,423--an increase of 20 percent over summer 1970; and 5,606 credit hours.
28	July	Circuit Court of Cook County upholds the college election of four trustees 10 April 1971 in case of T. Rouse et. al. v. A. S. Hannagen et. al. (71-L-5219).
12	August	FY72 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $3,006,336.
30	September	Building Bonds of $4,400,000 are sold for construction of main building.
	September	Dental building is occupied.

1	**October**	Illinois Appellate Court of First District affirms the judgment of the Circuit Court of Cook County in the case of Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Wagner, Lovelace, Borrowdale et. al., in condemnation suit but defendants seek a rehearing.
21	**November**	Dental building is dedicated.
23	**December**	Illinois Appellate Court of First District denies rehearing in the case of Board of Junior College District No. 515 v. Wagner, Lovelace, Borrowdale et. al., clearing the way for Prairie State College to purchase lots scattered throughout 24 acres on permanent campus site.

1972

6	**January**	Benjamin G. Cooke resigns as director of Black Studies program.
31	**January**	College enters agreement with the City of Chicago Heights whereby the college pays Chicago Heights $110,000 for the vacation of streets and alleys on the south (main) campus site and the college pays for widening Coolidge Street. In return the City of Chicago Heights agrees to annex the north campus into Chicago Heights.
3	**February**	United States District Court, Northern District, Eastern Division, Ill., dismisses complaint of R. W. Hostrop (Hostrop v. Board of Junior College District No. 515, 337 F. Supp. 980, 1972).
24	**February**	Labor Studies program is approved as part of the Business Occupation curriculum.
1	**March**	College is authorized as an official General Education Development (GED) testing center to assist adults in gaining educational competency.
21	**March**	Intercollegiate athletics are discontinued.
24	**March**	Equal Employment Act (Public Law 92-261) is enacted, extending Equal Employment Opportunity Commission jurisdiction to educational institutions.
27	**April**	Approval is given for making physical education voluntary.
7	**June**	Thirteenth commencement is held in Holiday Inn, Crete, with 91 Associate in Arts degrees, 127 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 53 various certificates awarded.
13	**June**	Teachers' Union strikes for third time in four years.
16	**June**	Tentative agreement is reached between trustees and the Teachers' Union.
19	**June**	Classes resume under tentative agreement between trustees and the Teachers' Union while negotiations continue under federal mediation.
23	**June**	Education Amendments Act Title IX (Public Law 92-318) is enacted therein prohibiting sex discrimination in any education program receiving financial assistance.
10	**July**	Capital Development Board Act (Public Act 77-1995) is enacted "to build...educational...equipment for ...Illinois."

13	**July**	Agreement is entered with the Illinois Building Authority (IBA) for Phase I construction of Prairie State College, with the total cost not to exceed $10,367,480 of which the IBA share will not exceed $7,775,000.
27	**July**	Structural Drafting Technology and Social Aide programs are deactivated.
28	**July**	North Central Association of Colleges continues Prairie State College accreditation as an Associate degree-granting institution but puts college on private probation with reexamination in three years.
3	**August**	Agreements previously conveyed to the Illinois Building Authority are assigned to the Capital Development Board (CDB).
14	**August**	Ground is broken for construction of main building on south campus.
17	**August**	An Act in Relation to Public Meetings (Public Act 77-2549) is amended providing Class C misdemeanor for any person in violation.
31	**August**	Administrative organizational structure is approved.
11	**September**	Higher Education Cooperation Act (Public Act 77-2813) is enacted to provide state funds for cooperative programs between Illinois institutions of higher education.
14	**September**	Two-year agreement is ratified between trustees and Teachers' Union.
14	**September**	FY73 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $3,005,264.
1	**October**	Formal ground-breaking ceremony for main building is held on north campus with Governor Richard B. Ogilvie delivering main address and an oak tree planted to symbolize the future growth of Prairie State College.
26	**October**	Affirmative Action Committee is formed.
27	**November**	Chicago Heights City Council approves annexation into Chicago Heights of 50 acres north of Vollmer Road (north campus), clearing way for the City of Chicago Heights to provide police and fire protection and sanitation services for north campus and vacate streets and alleys on the south campus.
21	**December**	Upon appeal by R. W. Hostrop, United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, reverses and remands case to the U.S. District Court for consideration of the causes of action raised by plaintiff (471 F. 2d 488, 1972).
28	**December**	College becomes a member of the Illinois State Library Network providing for inter-library loans effective 1 January 1973.

1973

25	**January**	Mexican-American history course is approved.
22	**February**	Flag design of Mrs. Inta Srader is adopted as official college flag.
22	**March**	Modification of Associate in Arts degree requirements is approved.
22	**March**	Certificate programs in Police Science, Electronic Technology, Drafting Technology, Automotive Services, Clerk/Stenographer and Clerk/Typist are approved.

22	March	Deactivation status of Dental Assisting program is approved preparatory to restructuring the program.
10	May	Prairie State College archives are established.
13	June	Fourteenth commencement is held in Holiday Inn, Crete, with 124 Associate in Arts degrees, 171 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 44 various certificates awarded.
9	August	Equal Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action program are approved.
14	August	Prairie State College Foundation is established.
23	August	FY74 budget is adopted providing operating funds of $3,180,788.
28	August	Public Meetings Act (Public Act 78-448) is amended providing that home rule units may enact more stringent requirements.
9	September	Public Junior College Act (Public Act 78-677) is amended requiring junior colleges to admit "all students qualified to complete any one of their programs."
10	September	Public Community College Act (Public Act 78-669) is approved "to provide statewide planning for community colleges as institutions of higher education," thus taking the junior college system out of the School Code and changing references from junior to community college.
12	September	Public Junior College Act (Public Act 78-813) is amended providing that all territory in Illinois must provide its own junior college or annex to an existing one.
12	September	Public Junior College Act (Public Act 78-814) is amended providing for variable tuition rates not to exceed one-third of the per capita cost.
12	September	Act to Provide for Non-Voting Student Representation on Governing Boards of Public Junior Colleges and Universities (Public Act 78-822) is enacted.
26	September	Rehabilitation Act (Public Law 93-112) is enacted to develop services for handicapped.
24	October	College flag is dedicated at flag-raising ceremony.
25	October	Resolution is approved to allow senior citizens (62 years or older) who are residents of the district to enroll tuition-free.
28	December	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) (Public Law-93-203) is enacted to provide employment and training to unemployed and under-employed.

1974

28	February	Certificate programs in Teacher Aide and Child Development are approved.
28	February	Modifications of Associate in Arts and Associate in Applied Science degrees, as they relate to General Education requirements, are approved.
12	March	Industrial Electrician Apprenticeship program, the first apprenticeship program, is approved to train apprentices for various companies in the college district.

11	**April**	Trustees move to eliminate department and program chairpersons effective at end of spring 1974 semester.
15	**May**	Public hearing is held at Beecher on annexation of Beecher district to Prairie State College, Kankakee Community College or Joliet Junior College.
13	**June**	Cooperative agreement is approved for 27 courses with Thornton Community College and six programs with Joliet Junior College.
15	**June**	Fifteenth commencement is held in tent on north campus with 132 Associate in Arts degrees, 159 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 54 various certificates awarded.
18	**June**	Trustees and Teachers' Union reach last-minute agreement on new one-year contract, thus for first time avoiding a strike before reaching an agreement.
27	**June**	Site development improvements consisting of six tennis courts, two softball fields and one baseball field on north campus are approved.
5	**September**	Trustees and Teachers' Union ratify one-year agreement.
5	**September**	Recommendations for Instructional Services organizational structure is approved.
16	**September**	Tool and Die Apprenticeship program is approved.
19	**September**	FY75 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $3,439,603.
23	**September**	United States District Court, Northern District, Eastern Division, Ill., renders judgment in favor of Prairie State College in Hostrop case (399 F. Supp. 611, 1974).
5	**October**	Beecher District 200-U by way of "back door referendum" chooses not to belong to any community college district.
4	**December**	Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (Public Law 93-508) is enacted to increase vocational and educational assistance allowances to veterans.
12	**December**	Trustees move to invite a member of the supportive staff to attend board meetings as an observer.

1975

9	**January**	President Ashley Johnson resigns.
	January	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) begins, involving two men and 11 women averaging 67 years of age.
8	**May**	Industrial Management Certificate program is approved.
8	**May**	Graduation requirements for Associate in Arts degree are amended to allow four semester hours of physical education to be included in required 62 semester hours.
14	**June**	Sixteenth commencement is held in tent on north campus with 140 Associate in Arts degrees, 184 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 58 various certificates awarded.

17	**June**	Teachers' Union calls strike.
20	**June**	Classes resume with temporary settlement between trustees and Teachers' Union.
26	**June**	Thomas E. Deem is appointed interim president effective 1 July 1975.
26	**June**	Revised Policies and Procedures for 1975 are approved, with 1968 Policies and Procedures declared null and void.
26	**June**	CETA grant for Basic Electricity program is approved.
3	**July**	Richard C. Creal is appointed president effective 4 August 1975.
22	**July**	North Central Association of Colleges recommends continued accreditation as an Associate degree-granting instruction and recommends an early re-evaluation in three years.
7	**July**	Trustees and Teachers' Union ratify two-year agreement.
1	**September**	Air Conditioning, Hydraulic Machinist, Machine Repair, Millwright, Plumber/Pipefitter, Sheet Metals and Welder Apprenticeship programs are adopted.
11	**September**	FY76 budget is adopted providing operating funds of $4,097,166.
18	**September**	First classes (evening) are held in main building as 1975-76 academic year begins.
19	**September**	First day classes are held in main building.
24	**September**	Upon appeal by R. W. Hostrop, United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, holds that plaintiff (Hostrop) is entitled to recover damages against the Board of Prairie State College (523 F. 2d 569, 1975).
7	**October**	Trustees approve locating Vocational/Technical building as an addition to the main building rather than a separate structure.
9	**October**	Fall semester enrollment sets a record high with 43,341.6 credit hours, an increase of 35.5 percent over 1974; a headcount of 6,134, an increase of 38.7 percent over 1974; and a full-time equivalent of 2,889.44, an increase of 35.5 percent over 1974.
8	**December**	Dental Hygiene program is awarded full accreditation by the American Dental Association after three years of probation.

1976

22	**January**	1976-77 Academic Calendar is approved to begin in August with fall semester concluding before holiday vacation.
22	**January**	Construction of six tennis courts on north campus is approved.
23	**February**	Prairie State College Association of Black Personnel is formed to advance interests of black teachers and staff.
26	**February**	Resolution is adopted to construct a Vocational/Technical building as an addition to the main building.

22	**March**	*Alpha Alpha Omega* Chapter of *Sigma Phi Alpha*, National Dental Hygiene Honor Society, is established.
2	**May**	*Theta* chapter of *Alpha Beta Gamma*, National Business Honorary Society for community college business students, is established with 29 charter members.
12	**June**	Seventeenth commencement is held for the first time in the mall of main building with 114 Associate in Arts degrees, 164 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 54 various certificates awarded.
17	**June**	Construction of 600-space parking lot, adjacent to 850-space parking lot, serving main building is approved.
15	**July**	Resolution is adopted "to present a balanced budget as best as can be determined for FY77."
19	**August**	Resolution is approved to construct added parking area for 1,000 cars, including provisions for handicapped on north campus.
19	**August**	Affirmative Action program proposed by Affirmative Action Committee is approved.
19	**August**	Tuition raise from $15 per semester hour to $17 per semester hour is approved.
27	**August**	Fall classes begin, marking move to early opening.
2	**September**	Trustees approve resolution to withdraw recognition of the Faculty Senate until Senate is re-established as an organization independent of the Faculty Union.
16	**September**	FY77 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $4,713,300.
16	**September**	College Security department is established.
7	**October**	Fall semester enrollment shows headcount of 5,571, a decrease of 9.2 percent from the fall 1975 semester; credit hours of 42,331, a 2.3 percent decline from the fall 1975 semester; and full-time equivalent of 2,822, down 2.4 percent from 2,889 in the fall 1975 semester.
23	**November**	Tax referendum is defeated to raise Educational fund from .09 percent to .145 percent and Building fund from .03 percent .08 percent (yes votes-1,716; no votes-2,635).

1977

3	**February**	Construction of six tennis courts is approved.
9	**April**	Tax referendum is defeated to raise Educational fund from .09 percent to .145 percent and Building fund from .03 percent to .08 percent (yes votes-4,509; no votes-7,503).
5	**May**	Trustees enter agreement with Chicago Heights Park District to develop recreational areas on college campus.
28	**May**	Eighteenth commencement is held in the mall of the main building with 166 Associate in Arts degrees, 196 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 63 various certificates awarded.

2	June	Resolution is approved that Capital Development Board take action to make heating and cooling system of main building function properly.
14	June	Teachers' Union calls a strike.
16	June	Classes resume with temporary settlement between trustees and Teachers' Union.
7	July	Summer enrollment shows decrease of 8.9 percent in headcount from 1975; and decrease of 6.8 percent in credit hours from 1975.
1	September	Contract is ratified between trustees and Teachers' Union for two years, 1977-79.
1	September	RTA bus service is extended to the college.
15	September	FY78 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $5,022,518.
22	September	Consolidated Election Act (Public Act 80-936) is enacted, changing the election of community college trustees to November of odd-numbered years, becoming effective for Prairie State College in November 1981.
6	October	Fall semester enrollment totaling 42,277 credit hours shows headcount increase of 3.1 percent from the fall 1976 semester, representing the second highest enrollment in the college's history.
17	November	Trustees approve authorization for the Capital Development Board to seek bids for construction of the Vocational/Technical building at a projected cost of $806,850.

1978

19	January	Photography program is approved.
25-27	January	Severe winter storm forces second weather-related closing of college.
22	March	Prairie State College Teachers' Union, formerly Prairie State College Chapter of Cook County College Teachers Union No. 1600, becomes chartered as Prairie State College Federation of Teachers Local 3816, American Federation of Teachers.
6	April	Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments (Public Law 95-256) are enacted to prohibit involuntary retirement of any individual before 70 years of age.
10	April	Ground is broken for Vocational/Technical building addition to main building.
13	April	Spring semester enrollment shows headcount increase of 2.3 percent over spring 1977.
17	May	Tax referendum to raise Educational fund from .09 percent to .15 percent and the Building fund from .03 percent to .08 percent per hundred dollars of equalized assessed evaluation passes (yes votes-4,585; no votes-3,514).
20	May	Nineteenth commencement is held in mall of main building with 133 Associate in Arts degrees, 223 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 45 various certificates awarded.
15	June	College annexes to Bloom Township Sanitary District.

23	June	Performing Arts Center opens in Building J with performance of "Truly Newly."
20	July	Summer enrollment shows 3 percent increase in headcount and 5.3 percent increase in credit hours over summer 1977.
17	August	College is approved as an administrative agent for CETA Center for Vocational Assessment.
21	September	FY79 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $5,373,933.
21	September	Fall semester enrollment shows 2.6 percent decrease in headcount and 3.4 percent decrease in credit hours over fall 1977 semester.
	September	Job Bound Center is established.
1	November	Middle Income Student Assistance Act (Public Law 95-566) increases availability assistance to middle-income students.
16	November	Trustees Scholarship Award program is approved.

1979

15	February	Spring semester enrollment shows no significant difference in headcount and an otherwise overall decrease of 3.7 percent from 1978 spring semester.
19	May	Twentieth commencement is held in mall of main building with 142 Associate in Arts degrees, 216 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 116 various certificates awarded.
12	June	Teachers' Union calls a strike.
28	June	Kindergarten program, to be incorporated with Child Development program, is approved on a one-year trial basis.
28	June	Trustees resolve to hold summer school 2 July through 22 August with faculty who are willing to fulfill their assignments.
2	July	Classes resume with tentative agreement between striking Teachers' Union and the college, ending three-week strike, the longest to date.
12	August	Vocational/Technical addition to main building is dedicated.
	September	Office of Industrial Development and Placement Services program is created to provide apprentice support and interaction between the industrial community and the college.
13	September	Fall semester enrollment shows 2.2 percent increase in headcount from fall 1978 semester.
13	September	FY80 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $5,999,628.
17	September	Vocational/Technical addition to main building is occupied.
19	September	An Act to Develop Guidelines for Post-secondary Remedial Programs (Public Act 81-803) is enacted to "place the emphasis on postsecondary remedial programs at public community colleges."

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1	**November**	Public Community College Tenure Act (Public Act 81-1100) is enacted to become effective 1 January 1980.
3	**December**	Case of R. W. Hostrop v. Board of Junior College District No. 515 is settled for nominal fee in a Suspension of Judgment.
13	**December**	Teachers' Union contract is ratified for 1979-82.

1980

3	**January**	Prairie State College Office of Institutional Research and Grants is established to help college meet its need for systematic research and development.
17	**January**	Prairie State College sign, to be located in front of main building, is approved.
17	**May**	Twenty-first commencement is held in mall of main building with 144 Associate in Arts degrees, 220 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 98 various certificates awarded.
19	**June**	Summer enrollment shows 9.3 percent increase in headcount; 11.6 percent increase in credit hours; and 11.5 percent increase in FTE over summer 1979. Compared with summer 1978 enrollment the figures show a 22.1 percent increase in headcount, a 25.5 percent increase in FTE.
	July	Storage/Maintenance building construction begins.
18	**September**	Fall semester enrollment shows 37.7 percent increase in headcount over fall 1979 semester with a total of 5,933, the second largest fall enrollment in history of the college; and an increase of 4.7 percent in credit hours and FTE.
18	**September**	FY81 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $6,884,147.
18	**September**	Tuition is raised from $17.50 to $19.50 per credit hour effective with spring 1981 semester.
20	**November**	Special Education Aide program is approved.

1981

29	**January**	Trustees approve Instructional Services Administrative reorganization creating new Division of Continuing Education and Community Services; reassigning instructional departments to two divisions, Arts and Sciences and Career Education; creating position of assistant to director of career education; and creating position of planning, research and development, the latter to become effective 1 July 1981.
29	**January**	Spring semester enrollment of 43,429.6 total hours sets record in terms of credit hours and headcount: a credit-hour gain of 8.4 percent over spring 1980; and headcount gain of 5.3 percent over spring 1980.
	February	Maintenance/Storage building is occupied.
16	**May**	Twenty-second commencement is held in mall of main building with 156 Associate in Arts degrees, 223 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 95 various certificates awarded.
18	**June**	Summer enrollment shows 14.05 percent increase in headcount over summer 1980, and a 13.83 percent increase in credit hours and FTE.

18	June	New Division of Developmental Education within Instructional Services area is approved.
18	June	Affirmative Action Plan for 1981-82 is approved.
23	July	Revised Board Policies Manual and Handbook of Administrative Procedures is approved.
3	September	An Act in Relation to Public Meetings (Public Act 82-378) is amended providing procedures for closed meetings.
17	September	FY82 budget is adopted, providing operating funds of $7,904,283.
22	October	Fall semester enrollment report establishes another record in terms of total credit hours and headcount, with 44,252.6 total hours, up 3.1 percent over fall 1980; and 6,260 headcount, up 5.5 percent over fall 1980.
27	October	Prairie State College Hockey Club is formed and defeats Oak Lawn Blazers, 5 to 4 in first game.
3	November	First trustees are elected under Consolidated Election Law (Public Act 80-936).
19	November	Planning Process and Goals Committee Report is approved.
19	November	Five full-time permanent positions in Apprenticeship program are approved effective the spring 1982 semester.

1982

9	February	Spring semester enrollment figures approximate spring 1981 with total credit hours of 43,258.1, down 0.39 percent from spring 1981; headcount of 6,147, up 0.17 percent over spring 1981; and FTE of 2,833.87, down 0.39 percent from spring 1981.
15	April	Trustees approve salary freeze for faculty through 31 December 1982.
15	April	Election of student trustee to sit on board with all privileges of membership including right to make and second motions and to attend executive sessions, other than the right to vote, is approved in accordance with provisions of Public Act 78-822.
30	April	First "Prairie Fest Week," sponsored by Student Government, is held to showcase college.
4	May	Raymond K. Urchell is elected first student trustee to serve one-year term beginning 20 May 1982 with all trustee rights except voting.
15	May	Twenty-third commencement is held in mall of main building with 121 Associate in Arts degrees, 185 Associate in Applied Science degrees and 138 various certificates awarded.
20	May	Trustees amend hiring freeze to allow exceptions for hiring replacement staff.
21	May	Teachers' Union strikes.
9	June	Court order restrains union picketing on any portion of college property.

15	July	Summer enrollment shows decrease of between 13 and 34 percent in all categories compared with summer 1981.
15	July	One-year lease of Ridge School in Homewood for Child Development and Day Care programs is approved.
22	July	Lease of space in Building F to Illinois National Guard, effective 1 August 1982 through 31 July 1983, is approved.
2	August	College receives Title III Developing Institutions Grant for $1 million over four years.
8	August	Tentative agreement is reached between trustees and Teachers' Union after 79-day strike, the longest in history of Illinois community colleges.
19	August	Trustees and Teachers' Union ratify two-year agreement for 1982-84.
3	September	Department chairmen positions are eliminated and replaced with department coordinators.

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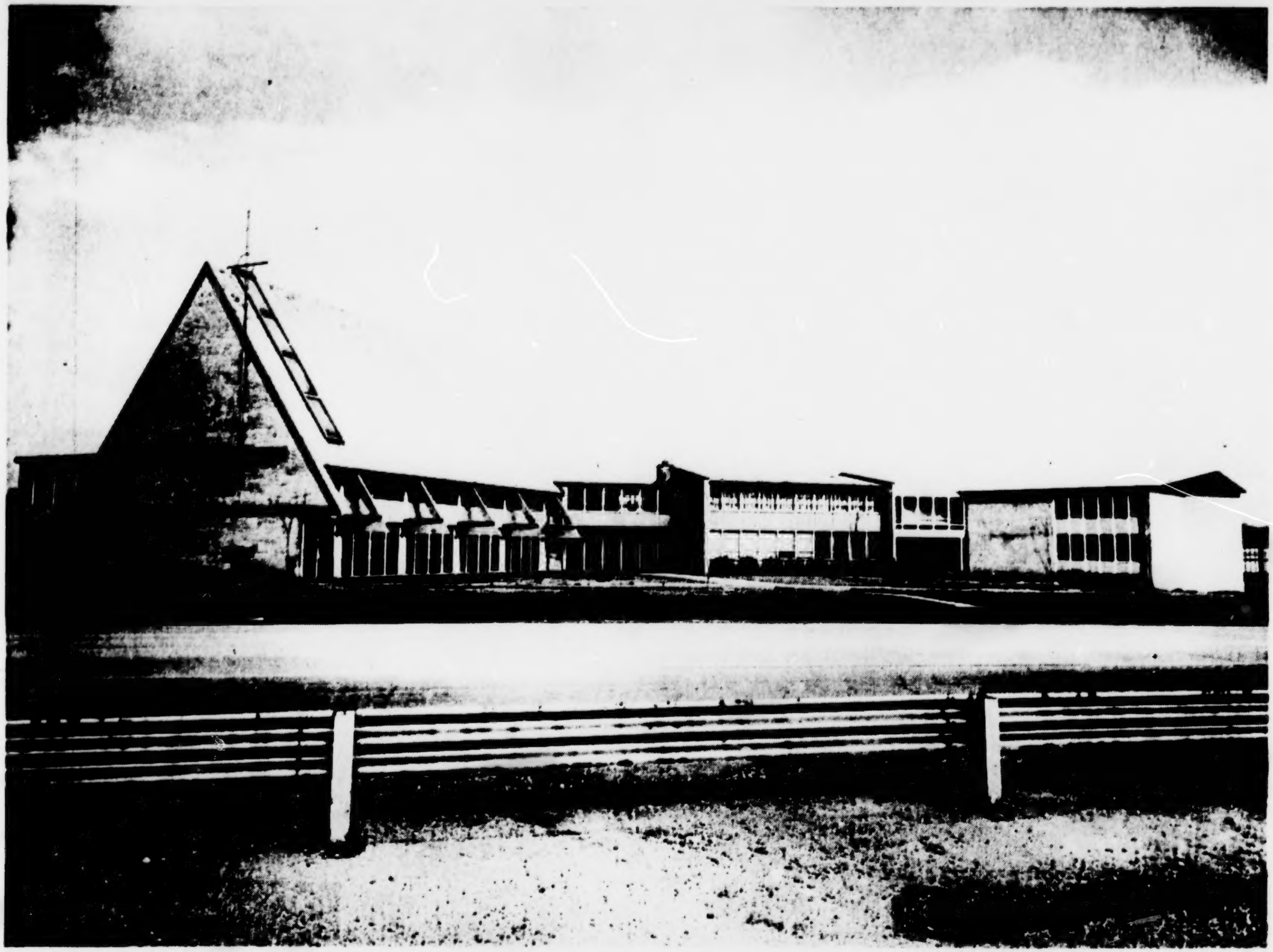

Exhibit A When Bloom Community College opened on 8 September 1958 most classes were held in the First Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church, 1045 Dixie Highway, while others were accommodated in the Bloom Township High School. The First Christian Church continued to provide classroom space until 1969 when the college moved completely to the interim (north) campus.

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Exhibit B The College Center Building was the first building in Illinois, outside Chicago, erected specifically for junior college use. Ground was broken in July 1958 and classes were held in this building for the first time with the opening of fall classes, 10 September 1959. The cost of construction was $300,000. Classes continued to be held in the First Christian Church with others in the Bloom High School.

<ins>Exhibit C</ins> Classes were held for the first time on the interim (north) campus, north of Vollmer Road and west of Halsted Street, on 7 October 1968. Originally, six temporary buildings were constructed. Four buildings were added. A relocatable hut was moved to this location from the campus on 10th Street and an adjacent residential home was purchased for college purposes. Most college classes were held in these buildings until after occupation of the Main Campus Building, south of Vollmer Road, in September 1975. The interim campus, including land acquisition, cost $1.5 million.

Exhibit D The Main Campus Building, which opened for classes 18 September 1975, remains the focus of Prairie State College. Construction of this building, including land acquisition, consumed seven years and 11 months and cost $12.2 million. This marked the longest period for the construction of any junior college in Illinois. The building stands four stories high and encompasses 250,000 square feet. An adjoining vocational/technical wing at the northwest corner of the main building was added in 1979.